

Prologue:

It glided over the grass feeling the creatures before it, humans, it knew the word, in fact it knew many words. It could not speak, nor see but it could hear and feel and it always felt hungry. It was not mindless as many would think, no the Dementor knew full well what it did was not right but did it anyway. It could not be happy and could only take a hallow happiness from those it could torment. It called it's fellow Dementors and they glided over to where their feast awaited. Two were not worth much, two men hallow and wore out with hard living. But the third, ah he was worth much, so very much.

This was a young man, a child with feelings as sharp and pure as they could get. The Dementor nearly shivered in pleasure at what he was going to do. It could not help itself and it went over to the exquisite feast and swooped down. He had to have all of the boy, he was his to take and he lifted up the now limp terrified boy and threw back it's hood. It would take all the boy had and it swooped down feeling the terror of the boy and it was like a rich wine, the soul would be a good meal. Then there was a flash, a bright light and the pain! The torment! It dropped the boy and fled the painful burning thing along with its fellow demons...

Severus Snape came too in the shrieking shack with one thought on his mind, that of murder. He was going to kill three Gryffindors, no that was not right, he could not harm the Weasley boy as his mother would wish to do that herself, who was he to stop a mother from that task? The girl, well she had followed the brat-who-lived-and-made-his-life-hell and that was who he was going to kill now. Snape groaned at the pain in his head but that would wait, Potter was going to feel much more when he was done with him. With that thought he stormed out of the hut, down the tunnel seeing that Potter had got his cloak before he left with that damn traitorous werewolf and Sirius Black!

Down the tunnel he crawled and he came out and looked around for the children, then he looked up seeing the full moon. Oh joy there was a werewolf on the loose without his Wolfsbane. Severus clutched at some silver in his pocket and drew it out. It was not much but it should help, he turned to the lake and thought he saw a flash of light,

carefully he made his way to the lake wand out and dread filled his heart at the sight of three limp forms. He looked around for the Granger girl and the Weasley boy but did not see them. He shone his light down on the prone figures of Sirius Black, Harry Potter and good heavens! Not Peter Pettigrew! Harry was not out cold he was curled up sobbing so badly he was shaking all over.

"Potter get up!" Snape snarled reaching down for the boy who just curled up. "Potter you silly child get up, are you too hurt to do so?"

"D-Dementors...tried...kiss." Potter said before he continued to sob.

"Let's get you up to the castle, not safe here." Snape said trying to sound more gentle.

"Y-yes s-sir." Harry said getting to his feet unsteadily.

Snape wished he had chocolate, no not because he wanted to reward the brat but because it would calm the brat down. He wrapped ropes around the two wizards and levitated them before him and helped steady Harry up to the school. He was greeted by a very worried McGonagall and when she saw Harry she helped get the boy to the hospital wing. She wanted to stay with him but knew that there were questions that had to be answered. This was why she lead Snape and his two prisoners to an office on the ground floor. Dumbledore joined them here and had the two bound to a chair. Fudge joined him and looked from one to the other.

"How, are they working together to get at Harry?" Fudge asked.

"That is what I intend on finding out." Dumbledore replied. "Severus can you get some Veritaserum?"

"Yes headmaster." Severus said heading out, his head would wait, he did not need to burden any with his wounds now.

"If it was not Sirius than Peter, but how could he?" McGonagall asked looking pale.

"That is what I want to know." Fudge replied.

Snape came back with the Veritaserum and gave it to Dumbledore who used it on both wizards and woke them up. He questioned them and it became clear that Sirius Black had allowed Peter Pettigrew to be the Potter's secret keeper. In the end it was decided what was to be done and a plan was put in place, there was no doubt that Sirius Black was in danger if it was found out at this time he was alive. Peter would be taken to Azkaban and it would be said officially that Pettigrew had been kissed by a Dementor. Before Fudge had his prisoner taken away he turned to Snape.

"I will see that you get a Metal of Merlin third class." He said before he left the room.

"Thank you minister." Snape said bowing slightly.

"Let's get Sirius to a private part of the hospital wing." Dumbledore said quietly. "Severus you will want to have your head looked at."

"It is nothing headmaster." Snape said.

"It is not up for discussion, you could have a bleed and not know it." McGonagall replied. "Poppy has chocolate for you too, you will need it after tonight."

"Very well, but I do believe that is a bribe." Snape smirked.

"You are impossible young man." McGonagall retorted.

Snape walked out of the room and went up to the hospital wing after some more bantering with McGonagall. He came up just as Dumbledore finished checking on the children and he went in. He saw Harry was already asleep as was Ron, Hermione was not and when she saw him she looked embarrassed and apologized to him as he walked by. He said nothing to her, he was too upset at the moment, or that is how he looked. Inside he was grateful that she had the sense to be polite, as for the brat-who-lived, well at least he would not have to see him this summer. How wrong he was...

Chapter One: A New Home:

Hogwarts:

Minerva McGonagall was normally a very patient woman. She had to be, taking care of a house of very high spirited students that seemed to attract trouble. Oh Gryffindors were brave and that, partly, is where the problem lay, sometimes they were too brave. Take the case of one Harry Potter, a young boy who seemed to not only attract danger but did not fear it as he should. She sighed and looked out over the grounds of the school from the headmaster's office, Merlin what really could be expected? The boy had practically had to raise himself, his aunt and uncle had given him houseroom and really not much more than that. She had had enough and she turned to face the headmaster who was sitting quietly at his desk watching her knowing she was about to give him a tongue lashing.

"Albus I will not stand for this one more day." McGonagall said.

"What will you have me do Minerva?" Dumbledore asked. "The blood wards keep him safe, he has to stay there."

"Not anymore, not with Sirius free and his godfather to boot." McGonagall replied.

"You know what we had to do, Sirius Black is officially dead for now, Peter Pettigrew killed him in a duel in the forbidden forest, officially Fudge had the kiss delivered to Peter." Dumbledore said. "Besides is Sirius really the man you want to raise Harry? He is more likely to get the boy into trouble though he means well."

"There is another way." McGonagall replied, "I will take Harry."

"We have been over this, its not safe..."

"It is if I take in Sirius Black as well, the boy will need looking after as much as Harry, my home is large, I can take them both, I want to do this." McGonagall said, "I will do this Albus, that boy needs structure when he is not at school, he does not get it with his aunt and uncle."

“You know how I feel, his safety is my concern Minerva.”

“As it is mine, but he needs a real family Albus, I can provide that.” McGonagall said. “I am taking him no matter what this time, I will not have him go back to his aunt and uncle and that is final.”

“Very well, I will have the wards set up in time for you to take Harry when the term ends.” Dumbledore said a small smile at the corner of his mouth, he knew McGonagall was right, Harry needed more than just houseroom.

“Thank you Albus.” McGonagall said.

Meanwhile the boy who these two were talking about had left the hospital wing and was walking back to the Gryffindor common room. So much had happened in the past day he could not take it all in at once. First Sirius Black was not only innocent but his godfather and with the capture of Peter Pettigrew exonerated as well. Harry had even gone back in time to save Buckbeak and in turn himself from the Dementors. He was happy, he never again would have to go back to the Dursleys and he had quite forgot about one part of last night that he should really not have, that is one Severus Snape. He nearly ran into the man as he was deep in thought and when he realized who it was and backed up fear on his face.

“Well, well, well if it isn’t Mr. Potter.” Snape said icily and Harry wanted to run but he remained in one spot.

“I, yes sir.” Harry stammered, he was scared and had a good reason to be he realized just how tall and strong the wizard before him really was. He gulped in fear and backed up, tripping he fell to the floor.

“Are you incapable of standing Mr. Potter?” Snape said reaching down with one hand and hauling the boy up to his feet. “Come with me, professor McGonagall wishes to see you.”

“Sir, professor?” Harry asked and he flinched as Snape looked at him.

"What Potter?" Snape said, the boy's flinching was getting to him, he was not going to strike him though he dearly would love to take him over his knee for last night.

"W-what does she want sir?" Harry asked.

"I don't know, surely to make sure the golden boy stays out of trouble." Snape said, "if it was up to me I would lock you up to keep you out of trouble, now come!"

Harry followed him and Snape knew he did not have to make sure Harry was following him, the boy had that much sense in him. He led the small teenager up to McGonagall's office and entered with Harry in tow. Harry looked scared and Snape was not in the mood to shepherd the little brat around the castle all day. He left Harry in a billow of black robes and Harry sat before McGonagall who looked down at the small boy before her. She saw he looked miserable and knew Snape could be harsh with his words, but Harry needed guidance and McGonagall was going to make sure he got it. She loved the boy like her own and wanted him to grow into a strong confident man and he was not going to if he went back to his aunt and uncle.

"You wished to see me professor McGonagall?" Harry asked.

"Yes, Harry I know Sirius said he wanted you to live with him." McGonagall replied, "however with things as they are this cannot be."

"I am to go back to the Dursleys?" Harry said looking as if he wanted to cry.

"No Harry, you will not, it has been decided that you will along with Sirius live with me for the time being." McGonagall said.

"Live with you?" Harry said looking up at her hopefully and a bit fearfully.

"Yes, at the end of term you will come to my house and stay." McGonagall said.

"Professor does that mean I can fly?" Harry asked as he loved to fly.

“Yes, it does Harry, however you will have to follow the rules to do so.” McGonagall replied.

“I will, I promise!” Harry said smiling his green eyes lit up with joy.

McGonagall Manor:

At the end of June a week later he found himself walking up to a large and stately home, it was an interesting place, part castle, part manor and all charm it towered over him and he loved it at once. It was made of stone and a large lawn surrounded it with a large wood behind it with a small lake. There were towers and lots and lots of windows and to Harry it felt like home right away. He resisted the urge to run to the house and instead followed McGonagall quietly up to the front door and into the house. He was not expecting the people there to greet the newest member of the family. He saw two people around McGonagall's age, the man looked similar to McGonagall and he was clad in full Scottish regalia and the woman next to him had her hair done up in a bun and had a shawl over her blue gown in the McGonagall tartan. Harry liked them at once as they looked so friendly and nice to him.

“Ah Minerva I see you brought young Potter then.” The man said then he extended his hand to Harry who took it, “I am Andrew McGonagall, the brother of your professor and here, this is my wife Helen.”

“Hello Harry, I have heard a lot about you.” Helen said smiling at Harry. “I hear you are quite a seeker.”

“Yes ma'am.” Harry said grinning, he could not help it, “I love Quidditch.”

“Good, good, well I am sure you will wish to settle in then.” Andrew McGonagall said. “You need anything just let me know.”

An elf led him up the stairs to the second floor and down a hall to another wing of the house. He was shown to his room and he grinned, he had never had such a room before. It was large, with a large bed, fireplace and a window seat that looked over the small lake. The

room was paneled in cherry wood and the curtains were a bright cheery blue. His trunk sat in the corner and he even had his own bathroom. He put his broomstick in the corner, hung up his jacket and went to find Sirius who he was told was in the library. He found it soon enough and was pleasantly surprised to see how large it was and filled with books, magical and muggle alike. But his attention was on the man sitting by the window reading. Sirius looked much better now, his hair was much shorter, just barely touching his shoulders and it was lighter too, not pure black as it had been. He had carefully trimmed his beard and he was clad in muggle attire, jeans and a long sleeved navy tee shirt and he was barefoot. He saw Harry and put the book down and walked up to him and took him in as strong a hug he could and Harry noticed he was still so very thin.

"Sirius I am glad to see you!" Harry said as Sirius held him out at arms length to get a good look at him.

"You poor boy." Sirius said trying to look Serious for once. "You look so much like your father, well can't be helped, at least you have your mother's eyes."

"Sirius can you not tease Harry like that?" Came the voice of Remus Lupin.

"Its okay, Fred and George call me scrawny speckled git." Harry said grinning.

"Nice, and they are friends?" Remus said giving Harry a hug. "Not all of us can have the charms and looks like Sirius here, most of us are gifted with brains."

"Nice one Moony." Sirius grinned, "so what do we do first?"

"Well first we have lunch then we, meaning you and Harry mostly go over the rules that Minerva has set forth for you."

"Rules?" Sirius whined.

"Rules Mr. Black." McGonagall said coming into the room, "I have no doubt that you know what rules are?"

"Um rules are for following." Sirius said glancing at Harry knowing he did have to behave now he was going to help take care of Harry. "They keep us safe?"

Harry grinned, his godfather was insane that was for sure, he thought Remus was just here to see Sirius and that was all. But he was about to get another surprise about that. After lunch which was of the cold chicken, ham salad, bread and butter and milk variety McGonagall had Harry, Sirius and Remus follow her to the bright and cheerful drawing room. They all took a seat, and Harry knew that McGonagall was going to go over the rules of the house, he hoped she was not so very strict and he could have fun this summer, but she looked so stern now he wondered if he would be having any fun at all.

"Now as I promised there have to be rules set forth." McGonagall said. "Harry you must set aside time to do your homework. You are not under any circumstances to leave the area the wards are set, I have a map of exactly where they end, this goes for all of you. You are to keep your room picked up, the elves have enough work as it is with upkeep of the house. Meals are at 8:00am, 12:00 noon, and dinner is at 7:00pm, you must be on time for meals no exceptions. Bedtime is at 10:00pm for you Harry, you are a growing boy and need your rest. One more thing, I am trying to get an old friend to come help protect Harry, if he does come Sirius you will try to behave yourself."

"Of course professor." Sirius said then added, "who not that, that..."

"No not Severus, Alastor Moody." McGonagall replied.

"Good because of him Remus no longer has a job." Sirius growled.

"It was not his fault." Remus replied, "I forgot my potion, I had no right to endanger the students like that."

"But when you went to school." Sirius protested.

"When I went to school there was no Wolfsbane but I had the shack, I was not in the shack when I changed and I had not taken the potion." Remus replied. "I told Draco and it got out that way."

"But you were a great teacher!" Harry protested.

"Yes I was, however I violated the rules and that cannot be allowed." Remus said sternly. "Besides I now have free time to write a my book."

"You still on that Moony?" Sirius said grinning.

"Well there were twelve years I was not myself..."

"Yes even if you were there would always be something to get in the way." Sirius retorted.

"You want me to take you down Padfoot?" Remus countered.

"Boys enough!" McGonagall warned them. "Now Harry you will wish to get ready for bed as you have had a long day."

"Yes professor McGonagall." Harry replied.

Harry left the adults and grinned as he head up to his rooms, he loved it here the rules were easy to follow, he was not told to stay out of the way and he was going to be allowed to go outside even, as long as he stayed within the wards. He felt at home and after he took a shower, changed to his PJs he went to bed and slept very well. He knew he was loved and wanted, truly wanted and he loved it here, he promised he would do his best to be good and he slept better than he had in a long, long time.

Chapter Two: The Village:

Harry woke slowly and wondered aloud if he had been dreaming. He reached over automatically for his glasses and put them on and gave a yelp of surprise. At the foot of his bed was a dog, a large shaggy dog that was looking at him its tongue lolling out and he was sure it was laughing. He sat up and looked around at the room and grinned, it was all true! This was his room with sunlight streaming into the large wonderful space. He was home and never, ever going back to the Dursleys. He got up and grinned at the dog who cocked his head and seemed to be laughing.

"Morning Sirius." He said and the dog changed back to his godfather.

"Morning Harry, have a good sleep?" Sirius asked.

"Yea, great, what time is it?" Harry asked.

"Seven thirty." Sirius said checking his new wrist watch, "you have no idea how good it is to have one of these again."

"I could imagine." Harry said getting dressed in jeans and tee shirt, both of which were too big for him, Sirius noticed this.

"I will have to ask McGonagall if I can take you to town, get you some new clothes." Sirius said.

"Oh these are fine, a bit big but so is my cousin." Harry said tying on his trainers.

"No more second hand for you Harry, you deserve better." Sirius said.

Harry grinned at him, he had not thought of his clothing, really he was glad to be here and did not give much thought to the second hand clothes he was wearing. He followed his godfather out of the room and down the hall to the smaller dining room the family used on a daily bases. He was hungry and he ate well as did Remus but Sirius still could not eat a lot, prison had taken its toll on him, he was gaunt and Harry swore he looked sick. But he hid it well as he laughed and joked and entertained the family here. After breakfast Harry did his

homework in the library watched by McGonagall who was reading Witch Weekly while Remus was reading a muggle romance novel and munching on chocolate.

Harry looked up as there was a flash of green from the fire and Madam Pomfrey came through the floo and brushed the ash off her robes. Harry had not realized how pretty she was before, she was tall and shapely and he smiled shyly at her as she smiled over at him. She went first to Remus to check him over with her wand and he offered her chocolate which she politely declined. Then she went to Sirius and scanned him and a frown came over her face, he looked up at her and growled as she took a full diagnostic of him.

"You are not eating nearly enough Mr. Black." She said. "I am going to have to give you nutrient potions, three times a day."

"I still cannot get much down." Sirius replied. "Disadvantage of being in that place."

"Yes well you are healthy despite being in that awful place." Pomfrey said. "These will help."

"I will make sure he takes them." McGonagall said.

"Good, Harry you alright?" Pomfrey said.

"Yea, excellent, thank you." Harry said.

"Good, you look well, better than when those things, well you look healthy."

"Who made this?" Sirius asked holding up one of the bottles then taking a sniff. "Oi that is vile!"

"Severus, and you better take it or I have ways to make you." Pomfrey said with a look that meant do not mess with me.

"Should have known, smells as foul as he is." Sirius snarled.

"He makes the Wolfsbane for me too Sirius, you will do well to take that." Remus said to him. "He is the best potions master out there even if you do not like him much."

"Fine, just as long as he does not know who it is for." Sirius replied. "He would love to gloat over that."

"I always have him give me a supply, some students need it on a regular bases." Pomfrey said walking to the fireplace, "you know he is not a bad man, just misunderstood."

With that she was gone and Sirius would have refused the small bottle but at the look from McGonagall he downed it and grimaced at the taste, but he could feel it starting to work and knew with a few of these he would get back to full strength soon enough. Harry said nothing and tried to concentrate on his homework, he tried so very hard to push aside the thoughts going through his head but all he could see was the kind face of Pomfrey and it was when Remus came to look over his work he realized he had misspelled heather twice. He corrected it and continued on the essay until he had the required eleven inches. He put down his quill, shut his book and looked up at McGonagall hopefully.

"Professor I finished can I go flying?" He asked.

"Of course, remember to stay in the wards." McGonagall replied.

"Thank you!" Harry said and he took off.

"He is really a great kid." Sirius said sitting by the open window his guitar in his lap.

"He is really a lot like both his parents, I see James but Merlin he is so like his mother." Remus said.

"Except when he gets upset." Sirius said.

"No especially when he gets upset." Remus said. "How many times did she hex us in school?"

“Ah as I recall it was James and I who got the majority of her hexes, she really was the best with the stinging hex.” Sirius said grinning. “She sure tamed James.”

“Yea she did at that, those two were perfect for each other, well once they realized they were made for each other.” Remus said sadly, “I miss them, to this day.”

“Its my fault, I trusted Peter.” Sirius said carefully putting his guitar down and standing to pace the room.

“You trusted him because you cared for him, he seemed so lost after school, and well you cared and wanted him to feel included. If only we had known what we know now.” Remus said. “You were blinded by your love for him.”

“He was my brother, we all were brothers, James, you I Peter, he was so very talented, no-one but us saw it but his talent was more for betrayal.” Sirius said. “I would not have blamed even Severus if he had struck me down in the shack.”

“Sirius Black it’s not your fault, you cannot think this way.” McGonagall said looking up from her magazine. “You are a good man and do not let anyone say different.”

He nodded and went back to the window and his guitar. He played until Harry came in, windswept and flushed his eyes alight and a grin on his face. He went up to his room, showered and changed and came down to lunch right on time. He was so very hungry and he ate well and McGonagall was glad, so far he was doing very well here, structure and love is what he needed and she had plenty to give to him. As they ate lunch Sirius brought up the issue of clothes for Harry and Harry looked embarrassed, as if he did not think much of what he wore outside of school.

“Well the village is not far from here.” McGonagall said and looked over Harry seeing his clothing was too big and too worn as well, “there are some good muggle shops there.”

“I am fine,” Harry said coloring a bit, “I will grow into these.”

"I doubt that pup." Lupin said grinning at him, "I mean you may grow a foot or more straight up but you are not going to grow out, too much of James in you for that."

"Yes, poor boy saddled with James's looks, too bad he did not end up more with Lilly's." Sirius said his grin meaning he was teasing.

"Well better he have brains than your looks Padfoot." Lupin said, "you Sirius have looks but no brains."

"Ah what?" Sirius said looking confused for a moment then grinning again.

"Remus you will take Harry into the village." McGonagall said.

"I want to go!" Sirius said nearly pouting he turned to McGonagall, "let me go!"

"Well alright," at this Sirius lit up, he really was so much like a little boy at times, "but only in your Animagus form." McGonagall said. "You are to behave, if you do not you will be facing Tabby and I know you do not want that."

"Of course professor." Sirius said knowing that he did not want to meet tabby, McGonagall's Animagus form. "I will be good."

So after lunch three people headed out to the village a short walk away. Harry was safe enough in the company of Remus and Padfoot, Remus was a very accomplished wizard and Padfoot/Sirius was a large dog no-one in their right mind wanted to mess with. Lupin was dressed in muggle attire, all brown and he looked very much like the professor he had been only a few weeks ago. He had bought the clothing with his earnings and as such he looked better for it. Harry had put a leash and collar on Padfoot but he did not really have to guide the Animagus as he followed quietly by his side.

Harry loved the village at once, it reminded him of Hogsmead, with its whitewashed stone buildings with their slate roofs, the ground floors crowded with shops. He was totally at ease here in the muggle world

and he noticed Lupin was too, he did not comment on the cars or other muggle things here as Mr. Weasley would. Then Harry knew he probably had lived a long time among muggles much as Harry had. They went into a few stores and got Harry jeans, some new shoes, one or two sweaters, tee shirts, some hoodies and a warm coat. Finally in new clothing Harry went with Lupin and Padfoot to a tea shop that served magical people and allowed Padfoot in. They were enjoying their tea when the last person Harry wanted to see came up, Lucius Malfoy.

"Ah Mr. Potter and Professor Lupin, out for a day of shopping?" He asked.

"Good day Mr. Malfoy." Lupin said looking up at him. "What brings you to Scotland?"

"Business." Malfoy said and he looked down at Padfoot who was dozing next to Harry. "Your dog?"

"Yes sir." Harry replied glaring at Lucius with all his might.

"Professor McGonagall thought it would be good for Harry to have a dog, this one was in a muggle pound, she brought it home and well as you can see he really is a good dog."

"I have dogs too." Malfoy said looking down at Padfoot and Harry wondered if Sirius would blow his cover by growing or something worse. But as Malfoy came near the dog Padfoot sat up and let him pet him wagging his tail in response. "He is a remarkable dog, you know the breed?"

"No, some mix though." Harry said. "I think he has some wolfhound in him."

"May I follow you back? The business I have is with Andrew McGonagall." Malfoy said and continued to look at the dog with a look Harry did not like.

"Of course." Lupin said.

They headed back to the house and Harry made sure Padfoot stayed right by him. He was being smart, he in no way let Malfoy know who or what he was. Yet Harry had a feeling he knew as Malfoy continued to look at the dog now and again with that same look. They came to the manor and were let in by the same small elf that had shown Harry his room's the day before. McGonagall came into the main hall and saw Malfoy and she clearly was not happy to see him.

"Mr. Malfoy what a disagreeable surprise." McGonagall said.

"Professor McGonagall, is your brother around?" Malfoy said smiling but Harry noticed that smile did not go to his eyes, "I am here on business."

"Yes, I will get him, you can wait in the parlor." She said turning to leave to get her brother. Once gone Malfoy turned to look down at Padfoot who was scratching his head with hind foot.

"I know who he is." Malfoy said to Harry. "I know who that flea bitten mutt is."

"Who do you think he is?" To Harry's horror Severus Snape came up, was he never to be rid of the man even on holiday from school? "I see a lovable dog."

"That is Sirius Black." Malfoy said.

"Really?" Snape said and he walked over to Padfoot, got down to the dog's level and pet him, Harry was expecting Sirius to bite him but he didn't, he was far too smart for that. "I can assure you if this was Sirius Black I would not get within ten feet of him and he would have taken my arm off if I tried to touch him, no this lovable mutt, Potter what is his name?"

"Padfoot." Harry said, "he seems to like you sir."

"Yes this Padfoot is a dog, nothing more." Snape said.

"Really?" Malfoy said.

"I would know if he was not, you know my skills do you not Lucius?" Snape said.

"Yes, ah Mr. McGonagall." Malfoy said seeing Andrew come into the room.

"Harry why don't you go outside with Padfoot, see if he will play catch." McGonagall said to Harry.

"Yes professor." Harry said.

He went outside and Padfoot/Sirius was indeed happy to play catch. What puzzled both him and Harry was why Snape had lied to Malfoy. He knew exactly who Padfoot was and he even had gone as far as to pet him. As Padfoot had no desire to meet the claws of Tabby he had let him and found Snape knew exactly where to scratch a dog's head and damn the man Padfoot liked it. He was going to have to get Snape back for that and so he hatched a plot in his doggy mind. It was near dinner when Malfoy left and Padfoot changed back to Sirius. He was grateful Snape was not there when he did as he was sure the man would have yet another insult to throw his way. He ate as much as he could, took his potion and played wizard chess with Harry until the boy's bedtime, and he turned in himself. He hoped and prayed to the God in heaven he would not have the nightmares again tonight as he had had for twelve years now...

Now I know what you are thinking, Snape covering for Sirius? Why? Well he has to, to protect Harry of course. Yes it would make since for Mr. McGonagall as a businessman to do business with Mr. Malfoy also a businessman too, sometimes we do things always like who we do business with but if one wants to make money. As for Lucius Malfoy, he cannot say a word about Harry as he values certain parts of his anatomy and his life...

Chapter Three: Helpers:

A week had passed and Harry found himself settling into the home quite well. The rules were fair and he loved the grounds and house so very much. At first he dared not explore the house but McGonagall told him where he could and could not go in the house and but for a few places he was allowed all over the house. It was a mix of different ages and all fit together very well. Everything was spotless and clean, but where his aunt and uncles home was sterile and cold this was warm and inviting. Potted flowers bloomed in the halls, windows were open to let in the sweet highland breeze and the halls all had windows that opened onto the central courtyard of the house with its fountain playing merrily. Harry loved to study out here by the fountain with its statue of a centaur, Fortus the seer a great centaur that in ages past had help save Briton from defeat.

Harry was out here with Sirius and Remus who looked tired and Harry knew why now. He had read a book that Sirius suggested and found to his surprise that a werewolf's condition was not only physical once a month but that Remus had to fight the mental urges that went with the condition. No wonder he was tired all the time. Harry had been reading up on advanced charms and had learned the theory behind summoning charms, shield charms and banishing charms. He was deep in a book on magical history when he looked up and saw a man standing in the doorway looking at him. Harry stood and stared and could not help it. He had never seen a man as scarred as this man, his face was so savaged and scarred it looked as if it had been carved by someone who had the barest idea of what a human face should look like. Part of his nose was missing but most bizarre was his magical eye, he had one normal beady eye but the other was vivid blue and whizzing around in his head. He was an older man by the grizzled gray hair that hung about his head. He was leaning on a carved staff when McGonagall came up.

"Harry this is Alastor Moody, Alastor Harry Potter." McGonagall said.

"Hello Mr. Potter," Moody said looking down at the small teenager, "having a good summer then?"

"Yes sir, good to meet you sir." Harry said feeling a bit uncomfortable around this formidable man.

"Mad-eye Moody." Sirius said grinning walking up, "I never thought I would meet you, you sir are famous, the best damn Auror England I wagger the world as ever seen."

"I see my reputation has proceeded me." Moody said smiling and Harry was relieved he could do such a thing. "Glad to see you here boy, not in Azkaban, never thought you could do what they pinned on ya."

"You thought I was innocent?" Sirius said surprised. "Wow that is good news then."

"Well seeing how you stood up to your family it would not have made since for you to join Voldemort."

"Wow." Harry said.

"What?" Moody asked.

"You said Voldemort, most people won't you know." Harry replied.

"Fear of a name only increases the fear boy, Voldemort was just a great sodding bully."

"Alastor language." McGonagall warned him.

"Right, well I am gonna be here rest of the summer, Dumbledore sees the signs if no-one else does."

"It is almost lunch time." McGonagall said in away that let everyone know the conversation was over. "Shall we go in?"

"Yes of course." Lupin said, "I could eat Buckbeak really."

"He would not like that." Sirius said then he turned to McGonagall, "where is he?"

"Well we had a bit of trouble were we were hiding him, he is going to stay here."

"Brilliant!" Harry said grinning.

"I quite agree." Sirius replied.

Harry walked into the house and to the dinning room and he was quiet through the meal and mostly listened as Moody talked with the family there. He could feel Moody's magical eye on him now and again and he felt a bit nervous, still he was glad this strange man was on their side. He ate well and after lunch he went to find the hippogriff who was in a paddock near the manor. Remus and Sirius came, Remus held back as he was not sure Buckbeak would let him near him. Sirius bowed low and almost at once the hippogriff bowed back and let him come up to pet him.

"Remus why not come up?" Sirius asked. "He is so kind and gracious you know."

"I don't know, he may not like me." Remus said looking at the magnificent creature. "Werewolf, some animals hate werewolves."

"Well you can try." Harry said and so Remus did, and to his surprise the noble creature bowed low to him. "See he likes you." Harry said.

"Ah and he is a hansom boy." Remus said stroking his feathers.

"I would agree with that." Came a voice behind them. "What is it?"

"Hippogriff." Remus said and turned to face the man who had spoke.

Remus grinned at the slender old man before him. The man was tall and had snowy white hair and neatly trimmed beard. He was clad in a muggle tweed suit and he looked similar enough to Remus that Harry knew he had to be a relation. This was confirmed when Remus walked up and hugged the man and received a bear hug back. Harry wondered if the man was his father but he seemed too old for that but if he was muggle than maybe he was. He did know that Remus was

half blood as he was but did not know if it was his father or mother who was a muggle.

“Harry I would like you to meet my grandfather.” Lupin said. “Grandfather this is Harry Potter.”

“Hello Harry, I am Robert John Lupin, professor and a muggle.” The elder Lupin said. “My son got his letter at eleven and I was most pleased, his wife is a witch. I am a psychologist, good thing I am too and you boy still owe me for not telling me about your condition, making me learn of it on my own.” This last to Remus.

“Well I didn’t want you to worry, there was nothing you could do.” Remus replied.

“Oh really?” Mr. Lupin said, “I have done some studies, come with me boy.”

Lupin left with his grandfather and Sirius and Harry took turns feeding rats to Buckbeak who seemed to really enjoy them. Harry wondered what Lupin’s grandfather could do for him, he was a muggle and the only experience Harry had with muggles was his aunt, uncle and cousin and his muggle school and that had not been a very good experience. But this man was different, he accepted this world and he truly loved his grandson. Harry wished his own muggle family had done the same, but he was here now and safe and loved by so many people.

Lupin walked with his grandfather to the house wondering why he was here. He knew that his parents had finally told the senior Lupin about him when he had disappeared after the deaths of James and Lily. They had been worried about him but as they were living in America now (this to keep his brothers and sisters safe from Grayback the werewolf that had bit him) they could not help him. So many years Lupin had hid from the world, living as much as he could in the muggle world, taking the odd job to survive and going from place to place living the life of a tramp and nearly a beggar. Until Dumbledore found him and brought him to Hogwarts to teach and helped bring him out of the deep depression he had been in for so many years. Finding out that it was not Sirius Black who had betrayed

him but Peter Pettigrew had help heal him a bit, but still it hurt that one of his brothers could have betrayed them all.

“So how are you doing?” Mr. Lupin asked his grandson.

“Still so tired, I fight the monster all the time, always its there in the back of my head.” Lupin said and he did look so very tired. “I hate what I am, I hate the monster I am and what I could do if I ever let down my guard.”

“I may have something that can help with that.” The senior Lupin said. “If you are willing to try something non-magical that is?”

“I would cut off my leg if it would help.” Lupin said quietly.

“Well not so dramatic this.” Senior Lupin said holding out a bottle, “I will be staying in Glasgow for a bit, I want you to start taking this.”

“What is it?” Lupin asked taking the bottle cocking his head dog like.

“Lithium,”

“I thought that was for depression.” Lupin said.

“Well yes but I believe that the parts of your brain effected by the monster can be tempered by this, there are some side effects but I believe it can help.” The senior Lupin said.

“How many a day?” Lupin asked.

“One, I am starting you out high, 300mg once a day to see how that works, okay?”

“Sure, anything to help” Lupin said smiling a hopeful look on his face. “Thank you grandfather.”

“Oh and let Sirius know he can come talk to me anytime he wants, have him call, professor McGonagall has a phone right?”

“Yes, she does.” Lupin said, “In the hall.”

“Good, give Sirius my number, I have a cell phone now, he can call anytime as can you.” Mr. Lupin said.

“You will stay for dinner?” Lupin asked him.

“Of course, I would not skip dinner here for anything!”

Dinner was a fun time for all, Robert Lupin was a great man and his stories got everyone roaring with laughter. Everyone here knew about world war two and he had served in it and the tales he told were funny. Even the normally serious Auror Moody smiled and chuckled and Sirius grinned at the insane things the senior Lupin had done. Now he knew where Lupin got his humor from. Once dinner was done Robert Lupin stayed that night and left in the morning to go to Glasgow for a conference, he made sure Sirius had his phone number before he left.

Over the next two weeks Harry noticed a change in Lupin, he was less tired and started to look healthy and Sirius noticed this as well. Lupin was starting to get the energy he had when he was in school back, before the monster really started to fully try to gain mastery as he grew up. He would go out and fly with Harry some days and he could be found walking the grounds or swimming in the lake if it was warm enough with Sirius and Harry. Sirius started to look healthier as well, he had had his teeth magically fixed, the potions he took were helping him fill out and he as he was eating more he needed the nutrient potions only once a day now. The three wizards grew tanned and healthy and in a week it would be Harry's birthday. Life was defiantly looking up for all concerned...

Why Lithium? Well Lithium “is indicated in the treatment of manic episodes of manic-depressive illness. Maintenance therapy prevents or diminishes the intensity of subsequent episodes in those manic-depressive patients with a history of mania.” I have seen pertaining to the study of the werewolf (I have been interested more in the werewolf than the Vampire because I have long held the werewolf as an interest). I have come to the conclusion that the werewolf has a

monster inside. Where does Lithium then fully come into this? Simple Lithium is a treatment for mania, and Lupin with the werewolf mind with him would make him very near manic. Lithium will treat the werewolf's inner monster, the part of the wolf that wishes to kill and maim. He still will think like a wolf, in pack mind and such but will no longer have the urges to kill and maim. This then is why Lupin would be so tired and why Grayback would look so strong and healthy. Lupin is constantly fighting the monster off. Now he can focus on what matters and the sickness he suffered is now mostly tamed.

I do hope that helps in explaining giving him Lithium, if not I do apologize.

Chapter Four: Birthday Surprises

Harry was looking forward to his birthday, normally he didn't really, he never had got presents before he met Ron and Hermione and now they at least got him something each birthday. Still he did not look forward to the day like he did now. It was two days to his birthday and he was walking through the house to the library to practice guitar with Sirius. He had a natural talent for music from his mother. When he had stayed with Mrs. Figg when his aunt uncle and cousin went on trips and left him with her she took pity on the boy and taught him to play piano. Harry had loved this and it was their secret that he loved staying with her, he made sure to tell his aunt and uncle about the cats and act as if he did not like being there but all in all she had been really good to him.

He entered the library and was not paying attention really as he was deep in a book on Quadpot the American answer to Quidditch. It was no wonder he ran smack into a solid wall of black robes and looked up startled to see the dour potions master Severus Snape there. He did not look pleased to be run into by a book wielding teen and he glared down at the boy, well not too far down, Harry obviously had grown an inch or two. Harry backed away and felt the reassuring hand of his godfather on his shoulder. Still Harry did not like being around Snape anymore than he had to. Lupin came in and saw Snape and took the steaming cup of potion shoved at him.

"Here wolf, take it." Snape snapped at him looking at Harry then at Sirius. "No doubt you don't want to forget it this time."

"Thank you Severus." Lupin said, "you are right Severus, there is nothing worse than a werewolf off his medication."

"Hnn, two mutts in the same room, how touching." Snape said coldly looking at Sirius then Harry, "or is it two mutts and a pup now?"

"How dare you!" Sirius snarled. "Who do you think you are Snivellus?"

"Still the same ruddy cur." Severus said coldly not even showing a flicker of annoyance.

“You....” Harry stopped what he was going to say as McGonagall came in and sulkily said “you are making the Wolfsbane for Remus still sir?”

“I don’t think you want a raging werewolf on your hands though I am sure you are used to having dogs around by now.” Snape said looking coldly at Sirius. “Some more flea bitten than others.”

“You...”

“Finish that sentence Harry and I will ground you.” McGonagall said heading Harry off.

“Sorry professor.” Harry said still glaring at Snape.

“Severus stop tormenting Sirius.” McGonagall said.

“He cannot help it, being what he is.” Sirius replied. “I know what you have done Snape...”

“Sirius please don’t pick a fight.” Lupin said handing the steel goblet back to Snape, “I don’t think that would set a good example to Harry.”

“Fine, later then Snivillus?” Sirius said squaring off with Snape.

“Sirius Black enough or I will ground you!” McGonagall said and at the look from the fully grown wizard Harry had to stifle a laugh. “I mean it boy I will not put up with any fighting between you two in this house or on the grounds or within two hundred miles of me!”

“Guess we take this to the continent then.” Snape said to Sirius. “Pick a date...”

“Severus you will do no such thing!” McGonagall said her eyes flashing then as Sirius was about to respond. “Nor will you Sirius.”

Harry was in awe, McGonagall would not take this from either of them and she could control them quite well it seemed and Harry was actually glad she was there. He really did not want to see these two men fight he liked peace and quiet. Though for the brief moments he

entertained the thought of watching a good duel with a side of popcorn. He walked Snape walk to the fire, throw some floo powder in and in a flash he was gone. Lupin looked over at Sirius who was glaring at the fireplace where Snape had left. Lupin sat down in one of the comfortable leather chairs and Sirius after a moment did the same.

"So you feel better?" Remus said to Sirius.

"I hate him." Sirius said throwing himself into a chair. "Stupid evil Slytherin git!"

"Well your brother was there..."

"Yes my whole lovely family." Sirius growled. "Snape is evil!"

"Well not wholly, he makes the Wolfsbane, granted he would want to keep me tame as it were but he makes it, if he really hated me he would refuse."

"The headmaster would make him." Sirius countered.

"It would not work, if Severus does not want to do something he will not, I think he really does care." Remus said.

"Yea right." Harry said before he could stop himself.

"Harry he did save your life several times." Remus said looking at Harry, "the last time was at the end of the school year if I remember correctly."

"Yes sir, he did." Harry replied. "Looking back I was relieved he did not turn me to ash then and there."

"Yes we all are." Remus said.

Two days later Harry got a surprise, well two really. He woke early and dressed and walked down to breakfast and was disappointed that it was raining hard and cold, McGonagall would not let him go out in the rain and fly today. Harry opened the gifts he got, a new wizards

chess set from McGonagall, a large box of chocolate from Lupin, a satchel with an extending charm on it so he could carry all his books and such in comfort from Andrew and Helen and from Sirius a hand carved flute and his own guitar. The greatest surprise came when Ron came through the floo network to the surprise of Harry that morning, with Fred and George grinning identically.

"Hi Harry, thought we would drop by see how you are doing." Fred said.

"Yea living with our dear old head of house must be interesting indeed." George replied.

"It is, its brilliant," Harry said.

"Well we have a surprise for you if professor McGonagall is willing to let you come." Ron said grinning, "dad got tickets for the Quidditch world cup!"

"That is brilliant!" Harry said grinning.

"What is brilliant Harry, ah Mr. Weasleys, I am glad you could come." McGonagall asked.

"Dad got tickets for the world cup." Ron replied, "we wanted Harry to come."

"I don't see why not, but he has to go with someone to watch over him." McGonagall said.

At that moment Sirius came into the room, but not as Sirius, but in doggy form as Padfoot. Fred and George did not know he was an Animagus and so they just saw a large black shaggy dog. Ron knew full well who he was and grinned as Fred and George paid attention to the happy dog who was wagging his whole body in joy. Harry grinned and wondered if it was safe to tell them, but then he knew they would love to know one of the marauders, or two as Lupin came in the room sipping a cup of tea.

“Padfoot will go with you Harry.” McGonagall said looking at the dog, “yes that would be good.”

“Why not a wizard?” Fred asked.

“Like professor Lupin?” George replied.

“Can we tell them?” Lupin said looking at McGonagall.

“Yes you may.” McGonagall said, “if you do not behave you will be meeting Tabby.” This last to Padfoot.

“What does that, whoa!” Fred said eyes going wide as the dog morphed to a grinning Sirius Black. “Sirius Black!”

“Yea, my godfather.” Harry grinned.

“Padfoot, no, can’t be.” George breathed his eyes going really wide as he looked at his twin.

“Padfoot as in Moony, Prongs, Padfoot and Wormtail?” Fred said catching on just as fast, “you’re a marauder!”

“Yup, Padfoot, Moony is over there.” Sirius said pointing to Lupin who raised his tea cup in salute. “So I take it you boys got the map and handed it off to Harry?”

“Yea, you are”

“our idols, we used you as or role models,”

“brilliant!”

“But where are the other two?” George finished.

“Prongs is dead, that was Harry’s father.” Sirius replied quietly.

“Wow, Harry the son of a marauder then the map really did belong to you, but who was Wormtail?”

“Peter Pettigrew, he betrayed us all.” Lupin said looking grim. “When my friends found out I was a werewolf well instead of abandoning me they worked hard for three years and finally we mastered our Animagus forms, Sirius is a dog, Harry’s dad was a stag and Peter was a rat.”

“A werewolf is no danger to Animagus and when he changed us being there in animal form helped out.” Sirius said.

“I kept my mind, now I take the Wolfsbane,”

“And what your grandfather gave you,”

“So life is great now.” Lupin finished.

“I think we may be in trouble.” Harry said to Ron.

“You are right mate.” Ron said seeing the identical grins on four faces. “Mum will have a cow if she finds out.”

“This means you were in school when Snape was,” Fred said.

“Greasy bat.” George replied.

“Great potions master” Fred said.

“We need to”

“Prank him”

“To cheer him up!” George finished.

Harry was not sure that was a good idea as Sirius Lupin and the twins sat down together at a table to talk. Harry and Ron left the room, that way if something happened they could not get blamed for Snape’s rage. Harry showed Ron the manor and Ron was impressed with it. Finally they came to the sitting room and sat by the window looking out over the rain drenched grounds and Ron got serious for a moment.

"You are lucky to live here." Ron said.

"Yea I know, professor McGonagall is great, no wonder." Harry said. "I am lucky to be here, and it's very safe too."

"Not like my house." Ron said.

"The burrow is perfect, I loved staying there." Harry said.

"You mean that?" Ron said.

"Yea, yea I do, your mum is great and I do miss chucking gnomes." Harry said grinning.

"Percy got a new job you know." Ron said. "With the former head of the international magical office."

"Former?" Harry said.

"Yea Barty Crouch, he died of a heart attack."

"Yea I saw that in the Prophet." Harry said.

"Yea strange he seemed so healthy, strange, but rumor has it he was ill for years, at least the head of the international office now is a great guy, not sure if you heard of Derek Yarrow."

"No, not yet." Harry said.

They spent the next hour talking about the ministry and who was in charge of what. Harry was very interested in the ministry and so the day passed fast and all too soon Ron, Fred and George had to head back to the burrow with a promise from Harry and Sirius to come in two weeks to the burrow. Harry was having a great summer so far and he looked forward to the world cup and went to sleep that night dreaming of Quidditch and the world cup...

Chapter Five: Saving a Demon:

Riddle Manor:

The old manor stood on the hill formidable and empty, empty ever since fifty years before the family had been found dead still in their dinner things in the drawing room abject terror on their faces. It was not as if anyone was sad to see the Riddle family dead, they were disagreeable and cruel people. With no heirs the house had been sold after but no-one would live there for long and soon the house was rumored to be haunted. That was not a bad thing, the villagers kept away from the house but vacationers came here to see the house and stayed in the village, and shopped in the village and put Little Hangleton on the map.

So no-one seemed to care or notice when there were lights seen in the manor house and when the old caretaker was found dead in bed no-one thought anything of it. Yet if they had gone into the house and up to the second level they would have seen a tall pale man with straw colored hair tenderly carrying for something wrapped in black robes. There was a look of worship and love on the man's face as he continued to feed something to the bundle hidden in shadow in the large chair turned to the fire. The man finished and made sure whatever was in the bundle was warm enough and stoked the fire.

"Are you warm enough master?" The pale man asked.

"Yes Barty I am very warm now." Voldemort replied. "Have you fed Nagini?"

"Yes master, she is fed and should be back soon to get warm by the fire."

"You have been most good to me." Voldemort said.

"I am sorry master I did not come sooner, I tried, I tried so hard." Barty Crouch Jr. said. "I came as soon as I could get free."

"You are the only one who did come, I confess I thought none would come." Voldemort said.

"Nothing could keep me from you master." Crouch replied softly.

"I know, you are most loyal and will be rewarded." Voldemort said.

"I only need see you returned to full power master as my glory, seeing you survive has given me hope."

"Did you bring what I asked you to?" Voldemort asked.

"Yes, he is in the next room." Crouch replied.

"Bring him to me." Voldemort said.

Crouch bowed low to the creature in the chair and took out his wand and put a disillusionment charm on the bundle and at once a tall hooded figure took the place of the small bundle. Crouch left the room and walked down the hall to another room where the prisoner waited. Crouch lit a lamp and walked over to the wizard on his knees his face surrounded by long locks of silvery blond hair. Lucius Malfoy looked up anger on his face and no fear. He refused to show this man fear, despite the torture he had already endured at his hands. If only he had his wand he would show this boy what he could do. Then again if his hands were free and not bound behind him he could show him what he could do with his bare hands. Insolent little brat, who did this little boy think he was?

"You dare kidnap and torture me?" Lucius Malfoy snarled at Crouch.

"I have my orders Malfoy." Crouch said, "you deserved the pain but he will see you now."

"Who?" Lucius said still not understanding why he was here.

"The dark lord." Crouch said seeing a flicker of fear in Lucius' face.

"He is dead, gone, surely..."

"No, get up, now." Crouch replied sharply.

"You lie." Lucius snarled.

"No, if you wish me to persuade to move?" Crouch said coldly.

Lucius got up and Crouch moved back so that he was out of reach of the other wizard. Lucius felt a thrill of fear go through him and wondered if he was to die. He walked before Crouch down the hall to the room Voldemort was in and fell to his knees before the shadowy figure. He knew this was his lord and master and he had a lot to explain, that is if he ever got that chance to. He was about to kiss the hem of the creature's robes when Crouch pulled him back. He was dead, he knew it and he felt the cold red eyes look down at him with quiet anger.

"Master I, I thought you were dead." Lucius said the calm mask he wore slipping to show his fear.

"Clearly I am not, you abandoned me Lucius." Voldemort said coldly.

"Master, I believed you had died, forgive me." Lucius replied.

"But I did not, I am alive." Voldemort said, "which is what you may not be at the end of this evening."

"I am sorry master." Lucius said looking down at the floor his shoulders slumped in defeat. "Do as you will with me."

"Barty unbind him and leave us." Voldemort said to Crouch.

"Yes master." Crouch said and bowing he left.

"Lucius remove your clothing." Voldemort said.

Lucius Malfoy did as ordered and slipped off his clothing and stood before his master naked. He was a well built man with pale smooth skin and Voldemort saw he had very few scars on him. Lucius had not allowed himself to loose any of his tone or build all these years. He had a snake tattoo on his right upper bicep and his dark mark was showing up dark on his arm. Voldemort knew Lucius hated being treated in this manor, forced to stand before his master naked and be

examined like this like some common slave. Yet he belonged to Voldemort and Voldemort had to put Wizards like him in their place more often than not. He had a punishment for this wizard before him that if he started to feel charitable he would put off. Right now he was feeling very angry.

“Ah yes you have kept in good form Lucius, strong and powerful, while I suffered.” Voldemort said.

“Master I am sorry, I was wrong, weak.” Lucius replied sinking to his knees before Voldemort.

“Yes you were, I heard what happened with what I trusted you with.” Voldemort said.

“Master I, I thought that would bring you back, I waited years and, I am sorry master.” Lucius replied looking up his gray eyes showing fear. “Master I wanted you back, I, I thought it was a Horcrux master.”

“I should punish you for that, but if you can do as I ask I may leave off punishment.” Voldemort said.

“Do as you will with me, I deserve your wrath master.” Lucius said doing his very best to show no fear.

“Yes you do, but for now go, I have a task if you can do this with out with out the disaster that was the diary.”

“Anything master.” Lucius said.

Voldemort regarded his one-time right hand death eater. He was regretting putting this wizard in that position now, how could he have done what he had done? He had trusted him as much as he could and what had the imbecile done? Why lost his diary for him what else was new? He was not even a governor of the school anymore so he could not keep some control over things there that way. Voldemort was not happy with Lucius, still he needed the wizard before him there was no doubt about that. He felt weak and knew that he had to get his hands on Harry Potter.

"I want you to get me Harry Potter." Voldemort said.

"It will take time master." Lucius said realizing he could not get Harry at the manor house and would have to wait until school started again. "But I will get him for you."

"Good because Lucius you fail me this time and I will feed you piece by piece to Nagini while you are still alive." Voldemort said. "I will make sure it takes as long as possible is that clear?"

"Yes master."

"I may even allow Fenrir a few pieces, you will not fail me again." Voldemort said.

"No master I will not fail you again." Lucius replied.

"Get dressed and get out, I will call you when I wish to speak to you."

"You wish him dead or alive master?" Lucius asked.

"Alive and unharmed, you will not harm him, he is mine to deal with." Voldemort said.

"Yes master."

Lucius rose and redressed and bowed low again as he made his way to the door. He saw his cane by the door with his wand and took it up bowing as he left. He was afraid, very afraid he did not really want Voldemort back but Voldemort was back, and alive. Lucius knew he was going to have to figure out how to protect his family and still serve the dark lord...

McGonagall Manor:

Harry woke up with a start and shout and rubbed the scar on his head. He knew by now it only hurt when something really bad was going to happen and he had been dreaming. He had heard the high cruel voice of Voldemort but did not see him in the chair he was sitting in. Kneeling before him was a young man with pale skin and straw

colored hair and he was speaking with Voldemort. Next to the bundle that had to be Voldemort in a chair a large snake slithered and Harry could understand her as Voldemort was speaking Parseltongue and he was talking about feeding him to the snake Nagini. Harry noticed that McGonagall was in the room sitting by him and he reached for his glasses and saw the look of worry on her face.

"I heard you cry out was it a nightmare child?" She asked.

"I-I don't know professor, it was more like a vision, I saw Voldemort, he was talking to another man." Harry said.

"What did he say?" McGonagall said.

"He said he needed me for something, then he was going to feed me to Nagini." Harry said.

"Who is Nagini?" Sirius said from the foot of the bed as he had just come into the room.

"His snake, they were speaking Parseltongue." Harry said.

"What did the man look like?" Sirius asked.

"Really thin, straw colored hair, really pale." Harry said.

"I see, Harry I will have a dreamless draught brought up okay?" McGonagall said, "that way you can sleep."

"Okay, I am sorry to be such a bother." Harry said. "I did not mean to have a bad dream."

"You do not need to be sorry child, you cannot control dreams." McGonagall said.

She left the room with Sirius and had a bottle of dreamless draught sent up to Harry. Once Harry had taken it and fallen back asleep Sirius tied his dressing gown on and followed McGonagall and a now awake Lupin into a small sitting room in this wing. McGonagall turned to Sirius and saw clearly the haunted look on his face when Harry had described the man that was with Voldemort.

"What is it Sirius?" She asked.

"Barty Crouch." Sirius said and he was pacing the floor he turned to McGonagall, "I heard that senior Crouch was acting strangely before he died, one month, one month ago he was all over the world Quidditch cup but then he just lost interest."

"We having a late night tea party?" Moody said slumping up.

"Its about Harry." McGonagall said, "he had a dream, he saw Voldemort and a boy with him."

"He described Barty Crouch Jr." Sirius said.

"Impossible." Lupin said, "he died in Azkaban."

"Give me a few minutes, I will get the house elf." Moody said. "Their house elf I believe was called Winky."

He left and Sirius sat down heavily on a chair head in hand. Lupin felt helpless as he watched Sirius sink into despair. Yet he knew full well his friend was far from well, twelve years in prison, twelve years of Dementors and of blaming himself did not go away at once. McGonagall sat down by him and put her arm around him and he rested his head against her. Right now she was as close to a mother he had, or really had ever had and he let her comfort him. Finally after half a hour Moody was back with a tiny elf clad in a tea towel crouched around his feet in fear.

"Winky does nothing wrong, Winky good elf!" The little elf said in a very high pitched squeak.

"We just need a few questions answered." McGonagall said gently to the elf. "About your former master."

"Master is dead, dead, Winky all alone, no family, no hope." Winky said sobbing freely now.

“Here don’t cry.” Moody said trying to be nice to the elf, he handed her a bit of chocolate. “There we just have a few questions, you are not in trouble.”

“Winky good elf!” Winky said nibbling at the chocolate, not aware that Veraserum had been used in the chocolate.

“Please, sit here, tell us about Barty Crouch and his son.” Moody asked.

“Master freed the son, master’s wife dying, used polyjuice potion to get master Barty out of Azkaban, Winky watched over Master Barty, but Master Barty grew strong and escaped, Master Crouch worried but keep Winky on, then Winky go to give tea to master and master dead.”

“So Barty Jr. Is alive and with Voldemort.” Sirius said looking up.

“And Harry knows this but how?” Lupin asked.

“The scar, when Voldemort tried to kill him he transferred some of his powers, Voldemort and Harry share a connection.” McGonagall said. “If what Harry saw is true and I believe it is then Voldemort is back.”

“But why does he not come after Harry?” Sirius said, “Lucius is a death eater, he knows where Harry is.”

“No the wards protect him, Mr. Malfoy could see him here but he cannot harm him.” McGonagall said. “Or even say he saw him at all here.”

“He should not go to the world cup.” Moody said. “A real target there he will be.”

“We cannot do that to him!” Sirius said, “I will not have my godson looked up just because of Voldemort, I will go with him, I will protect him I swear it.”

“He will have the Weasleys there, Bill, Charlie, Arthur and Percy are not wizards to mess with, he will be safe with them.” Lupin said, “I

was invited as well, Percy is going with his boss so there is one more ticket, Harry will be safe.”

McGonagall was in conflict, she wanted Harry safe but she wanted him to have as normal a childhood as he could now, it's why she had taken him in the first place. She knew he would be safe, but she still worried. Still it would break his heart if he could not go and she knew her answer, he would go.

“Very well, he can go, but you will watch him closely, keep him safe.” McGonagall said.

“Good, one more thing.” Sirius said, “I want him to be told everything regarding anything to do with Voldemort.”

“Sirius he is just a boy, no child should have to deal with that kind of terror!”

“Um I spent several years at a full moon with a werewolf and I am just fine.” Sirius said and at a look from McGonagall, “okay bad idea, but he has to know.”

“He is not James Sirius! Sometimes I think you forget that and this is not a game!” McGonagall said.

“No he is not James, I know that.” Sirius said, “and yes to me this is a game, a game of wizard's chess, where the pieces know where they must go and why.”

“He is a boy, a child!” McGonagall said.

“Aren't we all?” Lupin said.

“I would do well to tell the boy everything, if it will keep him on his toes.” Moody said grimly, “I do' like it anymore than you but he has to be prepared.”

“He has friends and family now, we all will protect him.” Sirius said, “I am not going to loose my godson again, no way, he has to know, keeping him in the dark will only harm him in the long run.”

“Very well, we better get back to bed then.” McGonagall said. “We have to be up to see Harry off tomorrow.”

They left the sitting room and checked in on Harry and saw he was back fast asleep. McGonagall did not go to bed right away, she dressed and went to see Dumbledore and told him everything that had happened that night. He looked worried and older than he ever had. He knew it was time, Voldemort was back and they had to prepare.

“I think it’s time to call the order back up.” McGonagall said.

“Very well, but we cannot let Voldemort know we have any idea he is back yet.” Dumbledore said. “Hopefully he will stay weak and we will have a chance to stop him before Harry is involved.”

“Harry has to know everything.” McGonagall said.

“I know, but now is not the time, not yet.” Dumbledore said sadly.

“I feel the same way but he has to know.” McGonagall said.

“I know Minerva, I know.” Dumbledore said.

She left him there and floo-ed back to her home. She had hoped Harry could grow up before he had to deal with this but it seemed that was not to be. She prayed to whatever gods there were that this would end before Harry ever had to fight...

Yes Lucius is a bad boy. Yes he is wicked and evil here, but what choice does he have? The man does not know where to turn for help and has only this to do. Still he really should know not to mess with Harry Potter.

Sirius is not out of character here, he knows Harry has to be prepared. He loves the boy but he knows he has to allow the boy to know exactly what Voldemort is going to do. He knows that trust will be lost

if Harry is not told and Harry is not a little boy. He is a teen yes but he has to know the truth.

Chapter Six: Back To the Burrow:

Harry woke early the next day fully rested. He remembered the dream but vaguely and was thinking more of the fun he was to have today. He got up dressed and packed his satchel neatly with clothes and some books and headed downstairs to see his Godfather and Remus at breakfast. He ate well and at ten that morning Mr. Weasley with Fred, George and Ron came through the fireplace in the library. Mr. Weasley grinned when he saw Sirius and Remus and the twins tossed some sweets to Remus. Harry knew all about Remus Lupin's sweet tooth now and he was about to warn him not to eat the sweets when that is exactly what he did. Sirius looked at Remus as if he was insane, but then it was easy to prank Remus with sweets as he knew all too well. He grinned as Remus' tongue began to swell at once and watched as the werewolf's eyes went wide with shock.

"What in Merlin's name?" Remus said when he still could as his tongue started to grow.

"What, Fred George what did you do?" Mr. Weasley asked appalled.

"Ton, Tongue toffee!" Fred replied grinning evilly.

"Makes the tongue"

"Grow huge"

"Yea, and its funny!"

"Yea really funny, shrinking charm work on that?" Sirius asked.

"Um yea, should?" George replied and Remus was on his knees now as his tongue was nearly four feet long.

"What in Merlin's name, Fred George!" McGonagall shouted seeing poor Remus' state and with a wave of her wand he was back to normal. "That is not funny!"

"Oh it was harmless enough." Remus said smirking at them, "you boys do know this means war?"

“Uh-oh.” Fred said.

“We are doomed!” George said grinning.

“We just wanted to cheer you up!” Fred said.

“I think it worked, Moony I cannot believe you are still so gullible after all those pranks James and I pulled on you!”

“Well I never expect it.” Remus replied, “must be my faith in you not doing it again. But I will have my revenge boys, beware.”

McGonagall was trying not to smile and it worked, she glared at the two boys who tried to offer her a toffee and quickly made their way to the fireplace. Not fast enough and Ron and Harry used floo powder on the fire and went through. They stumbled out into the kitchen of the burrow and Harry was grinning broadly and Ron was laughing. That was too funny, if that had been done to anyone else it would not have been near as funny, but Remus took it well and Harry looked forward to his revenge.

“Ton tongue toffee?” Harry said to Ron, “ton tongue toffee?”

“Glad it was Lupin and not someone else, wonder how Moody would react.” Ron said trying to envision the old Auror.

“He would never take anything our dear brothers Fred and George would offer.” Came the voice of a man at the kitchen table.

“Ah Harry meet my older brothers Charlie and Bill.” Ron said.

Harry looked over the table and saw two men there, Charlie was the shorter stouter man build along the lines of the twins with a stock of very red hair. He was so freckly he looked tanned and he had a shiny burn on his arm. Harry was expecting Bill to be an older version of Percy but he was surprised at how cool Bill looked. His red hair was long and tied back in a pony tail, he had a tuft of red hair on his chin and he was clad in jeans, a Weird sisters tee shirt under a gray dragon skin coat that matched his heavy dragon skin boots and in his

ear was a fang earring. He grinned at Harry and Harry took a seat at the table just as Mr. Weasley, Fred and George, Sirius then Remus crowded into the kitchen.

"So how big did your tongue get professor?" Bill said to Lupin.

"Four, no five feet, he never looked better." Sirius said grinning insanely. "Course most anything would improve his looks."

"Better brains than looks Padfoot." Remus said getting a laugh from around the table.

"Harry you made it then!" Came the voice of Hermione and she ran in grinning and giving him a hug.

"Yea, I would not miss the world cup for anything." Harry said.

"This will be my first." Remus said, "I thank you for allowing me to come."

"Not a problem, you were our dear brother and sister's favorite teacher you know." Bill said. "Ginny wrote about you a lot."

"If we stacked her letters together" Fred said

"she could write a novel!" George finished.

"Fred George that is not funny I am going to kill you!" Ginny said storming in and both twins took off running with their sister after them.

"They are dead." Remus said.

"Yea, what hexes is she really good at?" Sirius asked the other brothers.

"Bat bogey." All four answered at the same time.

"Yea and if that does not work she will beat you up." Ron said.

"Yea, she has even hit me before." Bill said grinning.

“Ah reminds me of your mother Harry.” Remus said grinning.

Harry perked up at that, he loved hearing about his mother from these two, they always had good stories about her as they had gone to school with her. He knew already he had a lot in common with her, he had her temper, eyes and both men said he was smart like her as well. They did not say his father was bright like she was and they even said it was rare for someone so smart to not be put in Ravenclaw, but then she was really brave too.

“She taught us in a very painful way why it is a bad idea to gang up on one person magically, three to one.” Sirius said.

“Yea, this was after we took our OWLS.” Remus said, “Sirius was bored and well we went to school with Snape as well.”

“We hated each other, normally resorted to muggle fist fighting.” Sirius said.

“Anyway we did something not very nice to him, I mean it was not sporting at all.” Remus said.

“You didn’t do a thing!” Sirius said.

“Not but I didn’t stop you or James or Peter.” Remus said.

“Yea I know but well its what happened after, we all got detention of course but its what your mother did that well showed she would not put up with that.”

“What did she do?” Harry asked.

“Said she wanted to talk to us.” Remus said a smile on his face. “We went to an empty classroom, our mistake, she had our wands, the door locked before we could do anything.”

“Yea, we knew we were dead then.” Sirius said.

"She turned on me first, I was a prefect you know and suppose to keep my friends out of that sort of trouble she said. Oh Merlin her hexes were amazing, she knew what I was, didn't phase her one bit she was able to use my er problem to really get me."

"How so?" Bill asked grinning at this story.

"A few well placed hexes on a werewolf can cause the werewolf to sprout fur." Hermione said.

"Right you are Hermione!" Remus laughed. "I hope you do not know any of them?"

"No sir, not for you." She said.

"So anyway after she finished with Remus, she kept the furry hexes where they would not show she laid into James, then Peter then me. We all ended up in the hospital wing." Sirius said.

"Why would she defend Snape?" Harry asked.

"Well they were friends, just friends mind you but if we had done that to any student she would have done the same." Remus said, "she knew what was right and fair."

"She did right then, if you gained up on professor Snape like that you got what you deserved." Hermione said hotly.

"Hermione you are very wise and I stand by saying you are the smartest witch of your age." Remus said.

Bill summoned some bottles of Coke™ and as Harry was thinking over the fact his mother and Snape had been friends in school (Snape even having friends was a concept new to him) and his mother's temper got him thinking. If she had such a temper and if his father was such a prankster how on earth had they even got together?

"So how did my mum and dad get together?" Harry asked Sirius.

“Well we knew they would, in time.” Remus said and his eyes flicked over to Ron and Hermione for a second and they didn’t notice but Harry did. “I mean all the fighting, I mean they fought, screaming yelling, well mostly her yelling and him cowering.”

“Remember she was free with her hexes and she could get him good.” Sirius said grinning. “I dated her once.”

“So did I.” Remus said smiling, “but in the end never were there two who really loved each other like those two.”

“It was in our sixth year, we all were trying to study, James said something and Lilly well she got up and the shouting started. Across the common room, they got closer and closer.” Sirius said smiling at the memory.

“Then they were no longer arguing.”

“They were Snogging!” Sirius finished. “After that even when they argued there was a um sexual passion behind it, not that they did in school mind you, McGonagall has wards up to prevent that kind of thing going on.”

“Yea you would know Sirius.” Remus smirked, “girl a week?”

“Ah those were the days.” Sirius said smiling. “Never in school, the wards like I said on both dorms, thank heavens for the marauders map.”

“You didn’t.” Harry said and Mr. Weasley was wondering if he should stop Sirius he was getting out of control.

“Which reminds me of something.” Sirius said getting serious and looking down at his Coke™.

“What?” Harry asked concern on his face.

“Well twelve years in prison is bad enough but I have not had a shapely witch in all that time, what I would give to have one now.”

"SIRIUS BLACK!" Came the voice of Mrs. Weasley at full volume.

"Oh dear mum." Charlie said.

Everyone turned to see Mrs. Weasley come into the room, her face was red as red could be and she was not happy. Everyone ducked but Sirius who looked up a grin still on his face. Harry knew with out a doubt he was insane as he continued to grin. He was going to get hexed Harry was sure of it.

"But Molly my dear its been ages, since I had...."

"YOU FINISH THAT AND I WILL HEX YOU QUIET FOR THE NEXT WEEK!" She shouted. "THERE ARE CHILDREN HERE!"

"Lets go." Ron said.

"Right, um I think Crookshanks is outside, he likes the gnomes." Hermione said.

"Lets go chuck some gnomes." Charlie said.

"Right behind you bro." Bill said.

"Right I need a bit of fresh air." Remus said.

"Excellent, I love chucking gnomes." Sirius said moving to get up.

"You-stay-where-you-are-Sirius-Black." Mrs. Weasley snarled.

Everyone else but Mr. and Mrs. Weasley evacuated the house and went into the garden. Harry felt sorry for Sirius but had to agree Mrs. Weasley had a right to go off on his godfather. He had been getting inappropriate and even Harry knew better than to talk like that in front of adults. He found the gnome chucking contest to be great fun and he impressed both Bill and Charlie though Bill threw his twice as far as anyone. Harry knew this was going to be a great week and he looked forward to the world cup...

Chapter Seven: World Cup:

Harry woke very early the next morning and after a quick breakfast of porridge he walked with Mr. Weasley, the twins Ron Hermione and Sirius now as Padfoot to the top of Stoat Head hill. Everyone else would Apparate later so they were able to sleep in. They found the Portkey, an old boot and stood around it, waiting. Harry wondered what muggles would think if they came upon one adult, a shaggy dog and five teenagers all touching an old moldy boot. They waited for a moment then all at once they were gone in a rush of air and Harry felt his finger on the boot stuck like glue the wind rushing in his hair.

He landed with a thud in a field and he stood and brushed the dirt off his jeans. He looked around and saw he was in a wild barren valley between craggy peaks. There were rows and rows of tents but unlike any tents he had ever seen. Many had tried to blend in and be as muggle like as possible but had slipped up with a chimney here or a weather vein there. It was good they were so far from any Muggle eyes as there was a lot of magic here. There was a purple fire with several African wizards in turbans and silk robes talking solemnly and several American witches were playing Gob stones outside their tent.

Bill and Charlie Apparated shortly after they came and helped their father set up the tents and get the fire going, with out magic. Harry went with Hermione Ron and Remus to get water with Padfoot running around them barking and yipping in joy. He was very happy to be out among so many people even if it was only in doggy form. He sniffed the grass, let a few children pet him and even romped with a few other dogs before coming back to Remus whining and yipping in joy.

"He is having fun, its been a long time for him." Remus said picking up a stick and pretending to throw it causing Padfoot to run thinking Remus had thrown the stick. "That never grows old."

"What if he comes back with a stick?" Hermione asked.

"He is not that bright, if it does not have my scent on it he will not bring it." Remus said. "He really is thick."

"Well he is in doggy form." Harry said quietly.

"Well there is not much different in brains between his human and dog brain." Remus said as Padfoot came up wagging his tail a puzzled look on his doggy face.

"That is not very nice." Ron said looking down at the happy dog.

Harry laughed and got into line at the water spigot. Padfoot got around Remus and was jumping on him to get the stick. He knocked Remus over and got his jaws on the stick and a game of tug of war began, a game Remus lost. Padfoot strutted off head high stick in mouth. The children filled their pans with water and those in line were clearly entertained by the shabby wizard and his equally shaggy dog. Harry headed back to camp and came on someone he really did not want to, the pale silvery blond boy Draco Malfoy.

"Nice dog Potter or should I say dogs?" Draco smirked at Harry. "I see your tastes in pets is even worse than friends."

"Shut up Malfoy." Harry said holding Ron back.

"Or what?" Draco said, "you will sick your dogs on me?"

"Say one more word Malfoy, just one more and I will knock you down." Harry threatened.

"Boys enough fighting." Remus said firmly.

"What will you do about it wolf?" Draco shot at Remus.

Harry yelled out a swear word that impressed Ron and he was almost on Draco when the last person he expected came up. Harry backed off quickly as Lucius Malfoy stepped up and looked from Harry to Draco then at Remus who was also backing away from him fast. Yet Harry saw an odd thing, Remus was not backing away in fear but respect and he did not understand that. Harry stood up straighter and looked at Malfoy with contempt.

"Draco you were not fighting where you?" Malfoy said and Draco looked at the ground.

"No father we were only talking father." Draco replied.

"Good because if your mother caught you fighting she would be most displeased." Lucius said looking coldly at Harry. "Especially with Mr. Potter."

"I am sorry father." Draco said.

"Good, come with me Draco." Lucius said. Draco shot Harry and Ron a filthy look but did as he was told. "Good day Lupin, Mr. Potter."

"Wow if Mr. Malfoy had not come up you were gonna hit that stupid git." Ron said.

"Yea, I am sick of him, he thinks he owns the world the way he acts." Harry said.

"Yes Draco is a problem." Remus said. "Lucius well he is a contrast, one minute you think he is the cruelest man and then he does something nice."

"What ever do you mean?" Hermione asked. "He is a death eater, Hagrid told us that much."

"Yes, but I knew him in school for a year or so, even so it would be best to stay away from him." Remus said.

Harry pondered what he said as they headed back to camp. He forgot most of it when he saw Percy there with three other men there. One was tall stocky and clearly a man who had once been in good shape but now had gone to seed. He had on Wimbledon Wasps robes and Ron told him this was Ludo Bagman head of the Gaming office. Then next man was just a tiny bit shorter, darker and jabbering away in Bulgarian. Next to him speak rapidly in the same language was a short wiry man with hair more gray than red. He was clad in muggle attire and Harry saw that he had a metal left hand. He was talking

with Percy who had offered him some tea and this of course was the new head of the international magical co-operation, Derek Yarrow.

"It's a good thing I brushed up on my Bulgarian, well between that, lots of German and a bit of French we are getting along splendidly." Yarrow said.

"Care to put a wager on the game?" Bagman asked and only Fred and George took him up on this.

"Percy would you come with me, I could use your help." Yarrow said.

"Of course Mr. Yarrow." Percy said.

He left with them and Harry saw that the fire was going and breakfast was cooking. Once they ate they rested until the evening. A long low gong sounded and they headed for the stadium that was reached by three tunnels. It was underground as it was far easier to hide it that way and Harry was amazed at the size of it. It was large enough for over one hundred thousand people and it glowed with its own light. To put this above ground would take too much work and this way they could use it year after year as needed.

To put down the full game would take pages and pages, a detailed play-by-play is in the archives. All one needs to know is that the Bulgarian seeker, a young man by the name of Viktor Krum caught the snitch but Ireland won 170-160.

After the game Harry went to bed excited and happy and he did not know the danger he would have been in if not for all the people looking out for him. He woke to confusion and noise and got up with the others and ran out and saw a sight he would not ever forget. A group of people, clad in black robes and hoods with bone white masks were levitating and tormenting two muggle men.

"This is sick." Ron said going white with fury. "That is sick and wrong."

"I have got to stop this." Arthur said.

"We are right with you dad." Bill said.

“Remus get the children to safety.” Arthur said.

“Of course, come on lets go.” Remus said.

“We want to fight.” Fred and George said at the same time.

“No you are not of age, go.” Arthur said.

“Listen to your father, lets go.” Remus said, “wands out.”

Everyone had their wands out and they ran for the woods on the edge of the camp, Remus leading the way. Ron tripped over a root and fell to his face and got up swearing to see Draco Malfoy leaning against a tree looking relaxed and he smirked at them.

“Stupid root.” Ron said.

“More like your feet.” Draco said.

“What are you doing here?” Harry asked him.

“You might want to hide her, they are going for muggles and mud...”

“Finish that and I don’t care who your father is boy!” Remus snarled at him.

“Oh so the wolf has a temper, not so tame now are we?” Draco taunted him. “Come to think of it they may like a wolf a bit better than muggle, maybe I should tell them?”

“You leave him alone!” Harry said shoving his wand into Draco’s face.

“Oh fine, but you better get hidden, they are coming this way.” Draco said. “A werewolf would be great sport for them.”

Harry felt sick but he ran further into the wood with his friends. Padfoot tried to stay behind but Remus threatened to carry him and that got him moving. Then at once the sounds of jeering from the crowd of death eaters turned to sounds of terror and Harry saw them

pointing to the sky and he saw something glimmering there. A huge mark hung in the sky, a skull with a snake coming out of its mouth and Harry started at it his scar prickling.

"Hide now, don't say anything don't move, Padfoot guard them." Remus said casting spells to hide them all.

"What is it?" Harry asked.

"The dark mark, it's Voldemort's mark." Hermione said.

"It means either he is near or he has k-killed." Ron said.

"Quiet, don't speak, I need to see what is going on." Remus said casting one last spell over them.

They watched him go off behind the spells he had set to protect them and watched as two men came into the clearing. They were hard to see in the dark of the clearing but as one of the men cast a spell to see if they were alone Harry saw the hook nose and long greasy hair of professor Snape. The other man was cast into the light for a moment and Harry saw Lucius Malfoy.

"Who cast it?" Snape asked Lucius. "He cannot, the mark does not burn."

"No but someone knows something is up." Lucius said.

"Is he, is he coming back?" Snape asked Lucius.

"If the signs are to be believed then yes." Lucius said.

"You will go back if, if he is back?" Snape said.

"If it is he, yes I will go back." Lucius said.

"Someone is coming." Snape said.

The two wizards left with a crack and Remus came back shortly after. Arthur and Yarrow was with him and they came over to where Harry

and the others were hiding. Seeing they were all there Arthur had Bill who had just showed up take them back to the tents. Harry told Bill what he had over heard and Bill was shocked, but not surprised. Despite the horrors of the day they all managed to sleep and in the morning they headed back to the burrow quickly. Harry still had the events of the last night on his mind, mostly of Snape, whose side was he on anyway?

Chapter Eight: Back To School:

Harry sat at the Gryffindor table feeling full and happy. The feast had been great and they had got several great new additions to their house. Harry looked up at the staff table and saw Snape looked sullen. Maybe because sitting right by him was Alastor "Mad-eye" Moody and Snape clearly did not like the seating arrangement. Dumbledore got up and the hall went quiet as everyone looked up and even Ron who had been close to dozing off looked up now fully awake. The trip to the school had been uneventful even with the heavy rain that soaked them before they got to the great hall and were dried off by Fred and George who cast drying spells on them. Now as their bellies were full they were ready for Dumbledore to give his speech.

"I must say this is another great year to look forward to." Dumbledore said, "firstly I must regretfully say that the Quidditch inter house cup will not be taking place this year."

"Your joking!" Ron said a bit too loudly.

"No Mr. Weasley how ever I did hear a good one this summer about..." At the clearing of McGonagall's throat, "ah well now is not the time, the reason for this is Hogwarts is hosting the Triwizard tournament this year!"

"Wow!" Ron said. "Its been over an hundred years since we had that!"

"What is that?" Harry asked.

"It's a contest between the three largest Wizing schools in Europe." Hermione said. "Beauxbatons and Durmstang are the two other Wizing schools, it's in Hogwarts a history, when are you two ever going to read it?"

"Why read it when we have you?" Ron said.

They were dismissed and Harry was excited at this turn of events. He envisioned himself in the tournament, hosting the cup and cheering as he drifted off to sleep. His dreams shifted though, and he saw faces, people in black robes, bone white masks, calling to him, to join

them. He heard a high cold laugh and a scream and woke with a start hoping he had not been the one to scream. He sat up and put on his glasses and looked around, it was morning and by the fact Neville was still snoring he had not screamed. He got up, and was finishing dressing when Ron woke up. He dressed and they went down to breakfast and to their first class of the day. It was as they were going to their next class talking happily Draco Malfoy showed up with a daily prophet.

"Hey Weasley it looks as if your father is in the paper." Malfoy said, "is that your mother seems a bit dumpy to me."

"You know your mother?" Harry said holding Ron back by the robes and facing Malfoy. "That look on her face like she had dung under her nose or is she just like that around you?"

"Don't talk of my mother Potter." Malfoy said turning slightly pink.

"Then shut it alright?" Harry said.

He turned to leave and felt something graze his face. From above them Moody had been watching this interaction, he was sure it was under control Harry was keeping Ron from decking the little brat Malfoy but he continued to watch them. When he saw Draco take out his wand and point it at the retreating form of Harry and shoot a spell he got ticked off and saw red so to speak. One thing he hated is underhandedness and you can bet if Harry had done what Draco had just done he would do the same. In an instant he had turned Draco Malfoy into a pure white ferret.

"Oh no you don't laddie!" Moody roared slumping down the stairs checking Harry with his magical eye and glaring at the ferret on the floor. "Leave it!"

"Leave what?" Harry asked.

"Not you him!" Moody said to Crabbe who was about to pick up the ferret who was scurrying towards the dungeons. "Oh no you don't! Stupid, cowardly, scummy thing to do!" He roared as he bounced the ferret higher and higher it squealing in pain.

"Professor Moody what are you doing?" Came the voice of McGonagall.

"Teaching." Moody said grimly.

"Teach, Moody is that a student?" McGonagall asked.

"Yup." Moody replied.

"No!" McGonagall cried dropping her books and with a flick of her wand turning the ferret back to a now highly pink disheveled Draco Malfoy. "Alastor we never use transfiguration as punishment, surely professor Dumbledore told you that?"

"Might have mentioned it." Moody said.

"You talk to the head of house, take points." McGonagall said.

"Well then I will talk to his head of house, that will be Snape, come boy." Moody said.

He left Ron, Harry and Hermione with jaws nearly open on the floor. Ron grinned and walked with Harry and Hermione to the great hall for lunch and did not notice Snape watching the whole thing. Snape realized that Harry did have some common sense after all, well a mouth but he had not struck back. His father would have drawn his wand and, no Snape could not think of that for here came Moody with the now very scared looking Draco Malfoy.

"You see?" Moody growled at him.

"Yes, come Draco, now." Snape said.

"I want a word with you as well." Moody said.

"Very well, Draco you will serve detention for your little stunt, and five points from Slytherin!" Snape said very angry now, he had to show he did not have favorites especially in front of Moody and most

importantly of this certain boy and who his father was. "You were wrong in what you did!"

"You heard what he said...."

"I don't want to hear it, you acted very foolish boy do not ever let me hear or catch you doing such a thing again!" Snape said. "You are a pureblood and I expect you to act as such, attacking someone behind their back is not a thing a pureblood does!"

"I am sorry professor." Draco said sulkily, "I will make sure not to do that again."

"Good, detention tonight, go and stay out of trouble." Snape said and Draco stalked off still smarting from what Moody had done. "You wish to speak with me sir?"

"Yea I do." Moody said.

Snape lead the older man to his office and closed the door behind him. He let Moody lock the door and he put his wand out of reach on the desk and stepped back. He knew Moody understood the reason behind this, he was Slytherin as well. Most people thought of Slytherin's as snakes but in fact they were more like wolves and Snape was exposing his throat as it were. He stood as Moody slumped around the office looking at the jars and such on the shelves. He turned to Snape and looked him over with both eyes.

"Voldemort is coming back." Moody said noticing the wince the other man gave at the name, "you know this too, its why I am here."

"Yes sir, I know." Snape said.

"Let me see your arm boy." Moody said.

"Yes sir." Snape said and unbuttoned his left sleeve and shoved it up to show his forearm and the mark, a mark of shame. "I don't want him back, use the Veraserum on me sir, you know I speak the truth."

"Yea, the problem is when he calls you back, what then boy?" Moody said. "He was gone when I questioned you last time."

"Yes he was, but you know why I want him dead." Snape said. "I could not keep that from you."

"Yes, well lets hope for your sake that keeps you from becoming his devoted servant again."

"I hate him, I hate him and want him dead, I am no longer taken by his lies." Snape said.

"Good, but I will be watching you." Moody said, "step out of line and you will wish I had killed you got it boy?"

"Yes sir, I do." Snape said.

Moody left and Snape took up his wand and summoned a bottle of firewhisky. He took one shot and put the bottle back and left his office. He had known this was coming and he dreaded and welcomed the day he would get back at Voldemort for what he had done. Oh yes revenge was sweet indeed served cold. All he had to do was wait, then when Voldemort summoned him go back and hopefully fool him into taking him back. Oh yes when Voldemort finally died Snape wanted to be there and see the foul creature look him in they eye and know at that moment it was him who had brought this to pass. Even if a certain boy with green eyes was the one to kill him Snape would be there to watch Voldemort die...

Chapter Ten: Meetings At The Lake:

It was a very cold day but professor Severus Snape needed to clear his head and he was going to do something drastic to clear it. He walked along the lake and to a cove that was hidden from the castle and began to remove his robes and clothing. Oh yes a swim in the cold water would clear his head nicely. He stripped down to his black silk under shorts and walked to the edge of the lake. He was a thin strong man with knotted muscles under his pale skin. Clearly he kept in shape, in fact one of his pastimes when he needed to let off some steam (besides swimming in a cold lake) was a punching bag. He dove into the lake and came up gasping and feeling better.

"You know its freezing out here Severus." Came the voice of Lucius Malfoy. "Are you sure that is wise in such cold weather?"

"I am clearing my head." Snape said turning in the water to face the pale haired man clad in dark robes of green. "You should try it or are you too old now?"

"Too old Severus?" Lucius said smiling and in answer he stripped down to his shorts and dove into the water. "That does feel good." He said gasping as he surfaced.

"You are insane to swim on such a day." Karkaroff said from the edge of the lake.

"Igor a pleasure to see you." Lucius said not really meaning it. "What are you doing here?"

"Walking, and I am head of Durmstrang, I was hoping your son would come." Karkaroff said.

"Well my wife wished him to go to Hogwarts and as one of my dear friends his head of Slytherin I could not disappoint him. Besides the Malfoy's have always gone to Hogwarts."

"Ah yes of course." Karkaroff replied.

Snape was glad Lucius was here, he did not want to be around Karkaroff alone. The man had the habit of making him feel dirty and used as he had certain interests. The way he looked at him and how he had acted around him trying to make him his pet for lack of a better word. Lucius had rescued him a few times from the man's grasp as he recalled. It was a good thing magical schools agreed on one thing at least, wards to protect students from each other's hormonal rage and any teacher that would try to abuse trust. In that way Snape knew Karkaroff had not be able to get to Krum that way. Both men got out of the water and used their wands to dry off and got dressed. Yet Snape was not fast enough to keep Karkaroff from grabbing his arm and looking at the dark mark now starting to reappear.

"Get your hands off him Igor." Lucius said using his cane to push the Durmstang headmaster back. "How many times do I have to tell you to leave him alone?"

"I was not going after him that way Lucius." Karkaroff said icily, "his mark, my mark and yours you know what it means."

"What does it mean?" Snape said finishing dressing wrapping his cloak around himself.

"The dark lord is coming back." Karkaroff said.

"Really?" Lucius said staring at Karkaroff.

"The dark mark in the sky, now this, you know as well as I do..."

"Kindly do not bring this up again." Snape said coldly. "Especially around my students."

"I see so you will not believe is that it?" Karkaroff said to the two men.

"We dare not hope." Snape said. "It has been so long."

"Stay away from my son." Lucius said to Karkaroff. "You are still not trustworthy in more ways than one."

“As if I would dare, even if on the slightest chance the wards...”

“You have been warned.” Lucius said icily. “Do not test me.”

“I would not dare.” Karkaroff said.

In a swirl of white robes he was gone back to his ship. Lucky both men thought the ship was well within the wards. Then again Karkaroff usually went after whatever he wanted at that time. Lucius turned to Snape who looked murderous. He had a right to be, this tournament would be the hardest on him, what with Moody and Karkaroff here.

“Has the Auror Moody spoken to you?” Lucius asked Snape.

“Yes, warned me to toe the line so to speak.” Snape replied. “As if I would dare do anything else.”

“I need to know Severus if the dark lord comes back will you join again with him?” Lucius said.

“Yes, I will.” Snape said to him.

“You have very good reasons not to after all.” Lucius went on, “if you do not I would understand.”

“Why would that be?” Snape said to Lucius, black eyes meeting gray.

“If not for Dumbledore you would be dead or worse, I know what certain Aurors wanted to do to you.” Lucius said, “the fact that Moody is here, though he must hate you at least he will not harm you.”

“Still you do not refuse the dark lord.” Snape said looking at Lucius keenly, he knew something was up. “You wish to know my loyalties, fine I will tell you clearly. As if now I am loyal to Dumbledore, for now. I know that the dark lord will come back and when he does I will go back, does that satisfy you?”

“Yes, it does.” Lucius said walking using his cane.

There had been a time Snape mused when Lucius did not need the cane. That had been years before, Voldemort had been gone and Snape knew the details. Lucius Malfoy was not the fully evil bastard that everyone painted him to be. Snape knew this as he had come to the manor summoned by Narcissa. Five year old Draco had been carted off to his parents' friends family and when Snape saw Lucius he knew why. He had been shot he told Snape saving muggle children from some very evil men and had killed those men for what they did to innocent children. Lucius had been shot in the hip, normally it would not be a problem to fix, but nerves had been severed. Snape had patched his friend up the best he could and healed the nerves and bone the best he could but Lucius, though without pain could not walk very well with out his cane.

"So who do you think will win the tournament?" Snape asked Lucius as they came to the castle.

"Well I have watched Diggory's boy fly and he is a good champion for us. I think he will do well."

"Beauxbatons has a fighter in that girl." Snape said. "Krum will fight hard but I don't see him winning, he is a great seeker but I fear not much else."

"Hmm, well wish to put a wager on the outcome?"

Now they had come to the gates of the castle and who should be there talking but Fred and George Weasley. They had seen the men coming talking and when they heard a wager they turned to them with identical grins on their faces. Snape shot a death glare at them and even Lucius was impressed that this did not phase the two boys. Then again it never did, they were two of his brightest students and he had made a deal with their mother to tutor them and try to steer them on the right course. He hoped that his work with them would result in them making something of themselves.

"Sirs did you say you wished" Fred began.

"To wager" George replied.

“Oh the outcome” Fred added.

“To the tournament”

“because”

“we are more than willing to bet”

“Cedric Diggory will”

“win completely.”

By the look on Lucius’ face Snape wanted to laugh, oh yes Lucius had never dealt with the Weasley twins as he had. But dammit Severus Snape would never give these boys the satisfaction of seeing him laugh, no matter how many pranks they pulled to try and get him to cheer up or even now. Lucius looked as if he had been hit with a confounding spell, he shook it off and looked at the two boys.

“A wager?” He asked smiling coldly, “surely you boys don’t have two knuts to rub together, how on earth can you wager?”

“Well we do,”

“Have money”

“Yea, please sirs”

“A wager?”

“Fine, ten galleons Fleur Delacour wins.” Snape said. “Say nothing to anyone about this!”

“Fifty on Krum.” Lucius said. “You will be paying me back until your graves boys.”

“We doubt that”

“besides we know,”

“Cedric”

“Better than both of you sirs”

“As we”

“play Quidditch with him.” Fred finished and they left with a flash.

“You know I almost feel sorry for their mother.” Lucius said looking at the identical forms retreating.

“You don’t know the half of it.” Snape said dryly.

“Indeed, well I must go, Narcissa wishes me to have lunch with her in London.” Lucius said.

“You are so whipped.” Snape said.

“Yes and I love it.” Lucius replied.

With a swirl of his cloak and robes he walked through the gate and was gone in a turn and a crack. Snape walked back to the school to give news of the meeting between him and Karkaroff and some of what he had spoke to Lucius about. He would have told Dumbledore of Karkaroff’s preferences but was sure the man already knew. He knew that was part of the reason why Moody was here to protect the students and because of the signs regarding Voldemort as well...

I

n case you did not know Karkaroff is a pervert. However he cannot harm his students or any others. This is a magic school, they can do charms, transfigure things and heal up people. Why then would they not have wards up to keep hormonal teens from engaging in “extra curricular activity” that the parents would be must unhappy about? This made so much since to me, no sex between students or teachers could happen and so the students would be safe at least from sex.

Chapter Eleven: First Task:

The day of the first task finally had come and had been very hard for Harry and Ron to get any studying done. If not for Hermione making sure they studied and their homework it was doubtful they would have got much done. As it was their studies were getting harder, they now were learning how to do summoning and banishing charms Moody was in addition to teaching them about the unforgivable curses shield charms and even Hagrid was putting on the homework load. When Ron had complained about this McGonagall reminded them that their OWLS came up the next year.

"Blimey how are we to have any time to enjoy ourselves?" Ron grumbled.

"Well Professor McGonagall is right, we have to prepare for our OWLS." Hermione said.

"Easy for you." Ron said. "You love studying."

"That is because I have something in my head." Hermione shot back.

"So what do you think the first task will be?" Harry asked heading his friends off from a terrific fight.

"Bet its dragons." Ron said.

"Why do you think that?" Harry asked.

"I saw my brother Charlie, you know he works with Dragons." Ron said.

"That is going to be very dangerous." Hermione said. "If it is dragons."

"Yea, yea it will." Ron said. "Still it will be fun."

Now the time of the task came and Harry and Hermione were looking forward to see if Ron was right. They walked down to the stands that were set up where the first task would take place and took their seats with the some of their friends and for once the school was untied.

Each student had a sign that said one of the following: "Cedric Diggory for Minister" or "Cedric Diggory Triwizard Champion" with his picture on it. Draco Malfoy sat down by them with Crabbe and Goyle and smirked over at Ron, Harry and Hermione.

"I know what the first task is." He said.

"So do I, my brother is tending to them now." Ron replied. "He works with dragons in Romania and he is here."

"Wonder what kinds are here." Harry added loving the shocked look on Draco's face. "I know the Swedish Short Snout, Romanian Long Horn oh and who could forget the Peruvian Vipertooth."

"That last does not travel well." Draco said. "Gets sick if it is taken out of the mountains of Peru."

"Yea, so which kinds do you think they will use?" Ron asked Draco.

"Norwegian Ridgeback, Hungarian Horntail and Swedish Short Snout though it would be interesting to see the Ukrainian Iron belly." Draco said.

"The Ukrainian Iron belly looks formidable but it is too much a coward around humans." Ron said. "The champion would be chasing the dragon and that would end up boring after a time."

Harry and Hermione stared, Ron Weasley and Draco Malfoy were talking not fighting. It seemed that this one thing they had in common, dragons got them to talk not fight. Harry was sure they would be back to their old selves in no time but the topic of dragons made them forget all about their feud. Still it was odd that these two were even talking not fighting and Harry kept an ear out for trouble as he watched Madam Hooch come to the center of the field with several wizards one of who was Charlie Weasley.

"Oh look a Swedish Short Snout!" Hermione breathed.

"She is not happy." Ron said.

“Wants to guard her eggs.” Draco replied, “see there?”

It was true, the dragon stood hovered over her eggs. She was a beauty, from snout to tail she was roughly ten feet long with dark green scales and large moss green bat-like wings. Harry watched as Krum came out onto the field and used the Omioculars he had bought at the Quidditch World cup. To his delight they worked here just as well and he could see every move Krum made. He transfigured a small rock into a dog and it seemed to work, the dragon went for the rock not Krum and he got between her legs and got a golden egg. He was on his way out when she turned from the dog and blasted out a short stream of fire and got him on the arm. He put it out with his wand and staggered into the tent he had come out of.

“Wow, he was very good.” Harry said.

“Yea but he did get burned.” Draco said. “he will loose points for that.”

“Yea he will.” Ron replied.

The score was put up, he got a nine from Dumbledore, a ten from Karkaroff but only a five from Madam Maxine. Then it was Fleur Delacour turn to face her dragon, a common Welsh Green. Harry was not sure exactly what she did, it was fast and she had her egg but the dragon was shaking its head and stamped down on one of her own eggs. Harry was sure she would loose points and he was right she got eight, four and eight.

“Cedric is next.” Harry said.

“Wonder what he gets?” Ron said.

“I bet the most dangerous.” Hermione said.

She was right, the most dangerous that had been brought over was put into place and it was a Hungarian Horntail. She looked ferocious with her bronze horns and dark black scales and her spiked tail she looked ready for war. Cedric came out and he stood a few feet away from the dragon waiting. The crowd went quiet, what was he waiting for? Then they saw something zoom toward him and he mounted his

broom. Harry roared in approval and watched as Cedric began to play a game of cat and mouse with the dragon. She did not use her fire, but watched him, stretching out her neck finally she took flight and he zoomed down and caught the golden egg and zoomed off.

"Oh well done!" Harry shouted. "Wow that was amazing!"

"Never saw that coming." Ron said grinning.

"Amazing." Draco said. "Bloody brilliant!"

Dumbledore agreed and gave him a ten as did Madam Maxine but Karkaroff only gave him a six and the crowd showed that they did not agree. However Harry had seen Cedric hurt and that would have taken points. So now at the end of the first task was Krum at twenty four points, Fleur at twenty points and Cedric Diggory in the lead at twenty six points. Harry followed his friends by the paddock where the dragons were and Charlie came over grinning.

"So you like the dragons?" He asked.

"Like them they are beautiful!" Ron replied.

"Thought you would say that brother." Charlie said making sure that the girls nearby heard that, who said he would not help his younger brother get a girl? "I would let you pet one but they are still a bit grumpy."

"You can pet a dragon?" A third year Ravenclaw girl asked in awe.

"Well most times you can, only tame ones and mostly after a meal." Charlie replied.

"Wow your brother is cool." Another girl said to Ron.

Harry grinned as Ron was getting much deserved attention. Girls were talking to him, wanting to know more about him and his brother who was a dragon keeper. Harry let Ron walk off to talk to a few girls who were now hanging onto every word. Charlie was looking at Harry

and motioned him over as the crowd thinned. Harry hesitated and climbed into the paddock.

"I heard you were a natural Parseltongue Harry." Charlie said.

"Yea, its not something I am proud of." Harry replied.

"Ancient superstition." Charlie said. "Something you might like to know, dragons understand Parseltongue too."

"They do?" Harry said in awe. "Not just snakes?"

"Come, let me show you, its how we work with dragons, it's a highly guarded secret but as you know Parseltongue yourself you should have a chance to speak to them." Charlie said.

"Wow, I never thought dragons." Harry said. "I thought what I knew was evil, because Voldemort knows it."

"No its not evil, only those who use it for evil are evil. Its just another way to communicate with mother earth's greatest creatures." Charlie said.

He brought Harry to where the fierce Hungarian Horntail was now huddled over her eggs glaring at the two wizards that came up. There was no-one else around and Harry looked up at her and spoke. He was shocked when he found it was not English that came from his lips but Parseltongue and the dragon looked at him and responded to him. He spent time speaking to her and knew that this was a secret he could not share even with his friends at that time. Still it a trill of joy ran through him as he spoke to the dragon and she spoke to him. He felt they became friends at that time and he understood why it was easy to love a dragon...

I took a bit of liberty by having the dragons understand Parseltongue I know. However there is historical (or mythological evidence) that some people could speak to dragons. The fact that in some stories the hero speaks to the dragon and some they do not would support this. A common language that only a few humans could speak to the

dragon would make since then as not all heroes could speak. Hope that helps explain why I did this.

Chapter Twelve: Moody's Mission:

Alastor "Mad-eyed" Moody was not a man, a wizard to mess with. He was as tough as a dragon and had as many lives as a cat it seemed. Yet to those he gave his trust which were few and far between he was as good an loyal a friend any could have. Even his enemies, many who sat in Azkaban could not curse the man as he had never used his Auror power to torture and torment as many of his office had. He was better than the Aurors he had started out with, many who were dead now, many who were little better than those dark witches and wizards they captured. In fact he had changed the Auror office as much as he could bringing in decent people, people who believed in justice and not revenge. Talented witches and wizards now filled the posts and very few of the old violent and cruel crowd were left.

Moody was a very private man, so much so very few knew of the wonderful wife and three amazing children he had had so many years ago. His children had gone to Hogwarts and after all had moved away from England. His daughter to Romania to work with dragons, his sons to America as they liked the free society and the fact that witches and wizards lived much closer to the muggle community than any of the European witches and wizards. Moody knew that it was really to get away from the pureblood mania in Europe as they though pureblood themselves had been disgusted with the whole affair. His wife had died of dragon pox thirty years before and now a widower he had created a wall around himself that he did not let any penetrate.

Yet the young boy he watched with his friend talking and laughing about the last task tugged at his heartstrings. The child was younger than his youngest grandson in America but not by much. There was a light about him he could see and he wanted to protect this young boy from the harm that he knew was coming. In fact he acted like any grandfather would, he dotted on the boy as much as he could and felt he had to take him under his wing. Oh yes Moody loved the boy Harry Potter as if he was his part of his own family, not because he was the boy who lived but because of what Moody knew he would become. It was that reason he slumped up the stairs to the headmaster's office to speak to him about something that was worrying him.

"Alastor what brings you here?" Dumbledore said smiling as he came in. Snape was there and he bowed to Moody and left.

"The boy Potter." Moody said.

"Ah yes, has he done something he should not have?" Dumbledore asked.

"No, no he is a quiet good boy in my classes he takes them very seriously." Moody replied. "It's his mind, its unprotected."

"Yes I know, but what can we do?" Dumbledore asked.

"Occlumency, I will teach the boy." Moody replied. "We need to do so now, before Voldemort comes back, the newest prophecy by Trelawney troubles me."

"As it does me Alastor." Dumbledore said. "It will be hard to teach him, it will hurt him far worse than most who learn it, his connection."

"Well what of his two closest friends?" Moody said leaning on his staff. "I will teach them all, that young Granger girl will make sure he learns."

"Very well, but this must be kept secret what you teach him." Dumbledore said.

"Snape will find out." Moody said. "You trust him?"

"You ask this after you used Veraserum on him?" Dumbledore asked.

"Well when Voldemort comes back will he go back?" Moody asked.

"No, not in soul or mind." Dumbledore said. "To spy for us I do think he would."

"Its never black and white, this war of good and evil." Moody said looking thoughtful. "Evil can be clever, to take such a gullible young man and turn him to the darkness and evil."

"Yes, he is Slytherin through and through, bravery does not come just in Gryffindor you know." Dumbledore said thoughtfully.

"That sounds more like something a Hufflepuff would say." Moody growled good naturally.

"I think Hufflepuff is the wisest of all houses, we tend to look down on them but maybe just maybe its time we start following their example." Dumbledore said.

"Hmm, you know you could be right Albus, you are the wisest headmaster in a long time." Moody said.

"I don't know, I don't know about that." Dumbledore said looking thoughtful. "I have made mistakes."

"I know, but I don't fault you for them, we all make mistakes." Moody said as he was one of the very few that knew all about Dumbledore and his past. "Ye have done so much good for so many years."

"I want to do right by Harry, he needs a good life, I am very glad he is not with his aunt and uncle any more." Dumbledore said. "I was wrong to put him there, his aunt and uncle are not the kind of people he should have been raised by."

"Well ye did right when ye let Minerva take him in along with young Black." Moody said, "now if we could get him and Severus to try to get along."

"I fear that would take a miracle." Dumbledore said.

"Aye, well Harry is alive is he not?" Moody said getting up to leave. "I better get to grading my papers."

It was a few days later Moody had the three young students in his office in the evening. All three had been given a scroll that told them they were to meet with Moody and could tell no-one of this meeting. The scrolls were signed by Dumbledore and so Harry, Ron and Hermione came down to his office wondering what was going on. They sat and looked up at him filled with dread and wondered what

was going to happen. When he locked the classroom door and put muffling charms around the doors they really got scared.

“Sir why are we here?” Hermione asked as bravely as she could.

“Well the signs being what they are its time Mr. Potter learned Occlumency.” Moody said.

“What is that?” Harry asked.

“Its where you can block your mind from a Legilimens, some one who can read your mind.” Ron said surprising Harry and Hermione. “My mum and dad know Occlumency.”

“So why are we here professor Moody?” Hermione said.

“Well its hard to learn alone, best for friends to learn together.” Moody said. “It can be painful, more so for some than others.”

“Meaning it is going to hurt me more than them?” Harry asked.

“Yes boy it will, but you have to learn it, its for your own good, you know why don’t you?” Moody said.

“Because I can see what Voldemort wants to do?” Harry said and he looked up at Moody fear in his green eyes, “and that means he can see what is in my mind!”

“Yea boy he can.” Moody said. “We will start easy tonight, just give you a taste, you will clear your minds and I will attempt to break into your minds, I warn you now it will hurt.”

He did not hit Harry first with the Legilimens but Hermione. She felt him probe her mind and thoughts flashed through her mind, being sorted, Draco Malfoy calling her a mudblood, Ron defending her and her punching Draco Malfoy in the nose. She gasped and found herself on all fours on the floor of the classroom. Ron was by her side and helped her to her chair and he looked scared but as he was next he cleared his mind the best he could. Moody was impressed with

him, he did get into the boy's mind but not far, Ron was able to push him out and Moody looked at him impressed.

"Well that was impressive." He said to Ron. "You are strong minded boy, for the first time you did very well."

"T-thank you sir, my head hurts though sir." Ron replied.

"So does mine!" Hermione said glaring at him.

"Harry you are next." Moody said.

"Yes sir." Harry said looking very pale.

Moody put it on Harry and images began to flash in the boys mind. Five he was envious because his cousin got a new bike and he did not. Seven being chased up into a tree by his aunt Marge's dog and left there until midnight. The high cold laugh of Voldemort and a flash of green light, no, no, no not that! Harry felt a pang in his head and found himself on all fours feeling very sick and he was trembling and very weak. Someone was kneeling by his side and he looked up to see the scarred face of Moody over him.

"You okay Harry?" He asked.

"No, that, that was horrible." Harry replied.

"It's what Voldemort does to his followers mostly, to see if they are loyal, I gave you a taste, its not pleasant it's not nice but you have to learn to block him out and you know why." Moody said.

"He is gaining power." Harry said.

"Aye boy he is, now that is enough for tonight." Moody said. "I want you to practice all of you clearing your minds, we will meet in a few days. I will send a scroll when we meet."

"Yes sir." Harry said still feeling sick and weak.

"Here, this will help." Moody said gruffly handing each of them chocolate. "Its dead useful for lots of things."

Harry ate his chocolate and found it did help, the pain did not go away but it did lesson and the nausea left him at once. Once he was no longer so pale or shaking he left Moody's office and went back to the common room. He slumped into a chair by the fire and stared at it moodily. If that was a taste then he really did not want to go though more. But if Hermione had her way he would have to go through it more and more. At least Moody had warned him it would hurt, he doubted someone like say Snape would warn him and just hit him with. Harry looked up startled, he now knew what Snape was doing when he caught his eye and he was going to learn to block at least him out.

"Snape!" He said sitting up straight getting a look from Hermione.

"What about professor Snape?" She said.

"He knows, the thing Moody spoke to us about!" Harry said.

"So he can use it on us?" Ron said looking pale.

"No he would not use it on you, he has used it on me!" Harry said. "I will learn this, I will and he will be in for a surprise!"

Ron and Hermione exchanged a look, if this got Harry to learn Occlumency well all the better. Harry was determined to learn so much so at the next meeting with Moody he had progressed to the point Ron was the first time Moody had used the spell on him. Moody only increased the Legilimens enough so that Harry was forced to work harder and harder on it. Finally Moody thought they were ready for the next step weeks and weeks later.

"You have progressed far and I am very proud of you, witches and wizards of your age able to do what you are doing is very rare." Moody said. "But you are now ready for a new task, you are to try to get into each other's minds and push each other out."

"Bloody hell." Ron said looking over at Hermione. "We are dead Harry, dead I tell you!"

"Well don't worry Ron I am sure there is not much in your head for you to worry about." Hermione shot back.

"What are you saying I am not smart?" Ron said.

"Well for a boy you have some brains but not much." Hermione said.

"Enough of this!" Moody growled. "Spend your energy in learning this not fighting!"

"Yes sir." All three said.

As they left the room Harry knew he was in for more pain but really it was worth it. He was sure he could block Snape and that was what he wanted to do the most now. It would be fun to see the look of shock on his face (if he had such a look) when he tried to read Harry and found he could not. Oh yes Harry was actually looking forward to potions for once and the look he hoped to get from one least favorite professor of his...

Ah yes Moody knows Harry has to block his mind for all their sakes. As he did not spend almost a year in his trunk in this fiction his mind is not as addled as I think it was in cannon. If he had been thinking clear he would have demanded Harry learn this as soon as possible.

Chapter Thirteen: Rita Skeeter and Snape:

Harry tugged his cloak around himself tighter against the bitter cold wind and drew his hood further over his head. Snow crunched under his feet as he headed with his friends to Hogsmead. They were chatting about the Yuletide ball that was coming up over Christmas break and Harry was excited that he was going to be allowed to go as it was for fourth years and up. He wondered who he would take, if he didn't find anyone it did not matter really to him. The only thing that did were the dancing lessons McGonagall put the whole house through, she cleared the common room of furniture once a week and had them practice until even Harry got it down. What surprise most in the house was the normally clumsy Neville Longbottom was a great dancer, a natural at it.

Yet now he was headed with Ron and Hermione into Hogsmead to get some candy, butter beer and some joke products to try to prank his friends. He saw Fred and George and grinned as they were talking together and looking over at someone, Harry looked where they were and saw professor Snape in heavy cloak over his billowing black robes. He was talking to a woman in long flowing robes of acid green with a matching cloak and hat. She had diamond rimmed glasses and by the way Snape was acting he did not like her at all. Harry walked over to the twins knowing the woman was Rita Skeeter a reporter for the Daily Prophet. Harry wondered what she wanted with professor Snape and why the twins were interested in the potions master.

"Why is she talking to him?" Harry asked them.

"Don't know, but he is not happy." Fred said.

"Yea, bet it cannot be good, she would want to take our dear potions master apart." George said.

"What say we go and..."

"Rescue our dear Slytherin head..."

"From a wicked witch who means him harm?"

“See you lot later...”

The twins left and Harry watched them walk to where Snape was standing. The three walked closer, close enough to hear what went on but not too close so that the dreaded potions master saw them. They were shocked Fred and George would even try to rescue the man but then the twins always did things by their own rules. They were shocked more by the conversation and it would just confirm in Harry’s mind how evil he believed Snape to be.

“Professor Snape what a pleasant surprise!” Fred said getting on one side of the potions master.

“Yes we were just talking about the last wonderful lesson you gave us.” George replied.

“What can I do for you boys?” Snape said looking at the two boys.

“Well we were getting some sweets and well we don’t want to bother your shopping” Fred said.

“But well we have a question about the last potion you taught us to make.” George replied.

“The are up to something.” Ron said. “Oh bloody hell they are rescuing him from her!”

“They did say they did not like her, so this would be perfect revenge against her, keep her from a good story.” Hermione said.

“Yea, doing that with Snape to do it?” Harry asked.

“Yea well Fred and George it is innit?” Ron replied.

“Do you even know what your dear professor is?” Skeeter was saying now.

“What the best potions master ever?” Fred said grinning.

"A very accomplished wizard?" George replied.

"He was a death eater boys, oh yes, now what to you think of him?" Skeeter asked.

"Oh not our dear professor, he is too good!" Fred replied.

"No way, and if you will excuse us but we need our professor." George add.

What happened next shocked everyone even Snape. Snape found himself somehow going with the boys into the Three Broomsticks leaving a shocked Rita Skeeter, Ron, Harry and Hermione behind. Harry could hardly believe what he had seen, Fred, George helping out Snape? Rita turned to see Harry and Harry wanted to hide but it was too late, and he was caught. Oh great now he had to face Rita Skeeter and he was not happy about that at all.

"Harry, Harry Potter?" She asked.

"Ah yes ma'am." He replied not feeling comfortable about this.

"I never thought I would meet the boy-who-defeated-you-know-who." She said.

"I didn't defeat him ma'am, my parents did by sacrificing their lives for me." Harry said.

"I would love to get an interview with you, do you have time?" She asked.

"I am not even a champion, surely they are much more interesting than me?" Harry said and he saw Cedric walking down the street. "In fact I see Cedric coming now..."

"Ah yes, Cedric Diggory, Hogwarts champion and he is the best seeker in Hogwarts, how does that make you feel?" She asked and Harry hated her but was nice enough to her in his answer.

"He was the best that day, I fell off my broom, he did not, besides he is going to win the tournament, if you will excuse me its cold out here and my feet are freezing." Harry said. "You should interview Cedric, he is really nice."

He left her there and went into the Three Broomsticks fuming, he really did not like Rita and he muttered a few things that got Hermione upset and Ron to grin. They found a table and took a seat and Fred and George joined them. Snape left the pub shortly after and Harry wanted to know why the twins were helping out Snape. Yet Ron beat Harry to it and glaring at his own brothers he demanded to know what was going on.

"What are you up to now?" Ron asked them.

"Nothing, we just don't like Miss Skeeter." Fred said.

"Yea she is not nice, said some mean things about our dear head." George added.

"That is not why you saved Snape is it?" Ron said looking suspicious.

"Well little bro we would tell you but then well mum would have to dig you up from where we buried you." Fred said grinning.

"You would not dare!" Ron said.

"Nah, mum loves you perfect ickle Ronikins." Fred said.

"If you are doing anything illegal or trying to prank professor Snape I will turn you in." Hermione said.

"We would never prank Snape, even we know better than that." George said grinning. "Dear bro lets leave our underclassmen and go see what else Hogsmead has to offer."

The two boys left and Ron glared after them. He was sure they were up to no good and he was going to find out exactly what they were up to. Harry was not sure this was a good thing as the last person that

had tired that had ended up with green hair. For a week, and they were in Gryffindor as well.

“They will come after you brother or not.” Hermione warned him.

“I have mum on my side.” Ron said.

“You would tell your mother on them?” Harry said.

“I would not have to if one of you did.” Ron said.

“You really want to find out what they are up to don’t you?” Harry said.

“Yes I do.” Ron said. “Besides I hate being called that.” Ron said.

Yet over the next few weeks Ron did not have anytime to see what his brothers were up to. The fourth years school work was getting more intense and what with that and the dance lessons that the prefects seemed to think everyone needed in addition to those McGonagall gave they remained very busy indeed. The weather got colder and colder and so the students stayed inside most days and enjoyed the warmth around the fires in the fireplaces around the castle between classes. Even Harry was looking forward to the Yule Ball that now was coming up in just a few weeks time...

Chapter Fourteen: Yule Ball:

Never had the castle seemed so crowded around Christmas break Harry thought. Then again most students went home for Christmas and did not stay at Hogwarts. Students fourth year and up stayed and a few third years lucky enough to have dates to the dance did as well. One of them was Ginny Weasley and she was going with Neville Longbottom as he had asked her. Harry and Ron knew they had to get dates but Hermione had a date when each of them asked her and so they thought they would have to go dateless, that is until two third year girls practically begged them to take them. They were from Hufflepuff, twin sisters, Aurora and Andromeda Green.

"Wow never thought I would be chased so badly like that mate." Ron said to Harry once they had accepted the girls dates and made it safely to the Gryffindor common room.

"Well they are pretty." Harry said. "Very nice too, they really wanted to go with us, I could tell it was not just because of my scar."

"Yea true that, I think my natural charm got to them." Ron said grinning.

"Well that or my good looks." Harry said and both boys grinned.

"Chess?" Ron asked Harry.

"Yea, sure why not?" Harry replied.

The castle had been cleaned up, walls, windows and the like that needed it were patched, cleaned and painted. Paintings were scrubbed clean and armor was polished until it shone. Garland and holly were everywhere and Peeves was warned if he did not behave the Bloody Baron had new ways to make him behave. The castle looked like a wonderland and Harry was getting nervous, Ron had despaired with his dress robes as he was unable to get the lace off them. That was until Harry ran into Dobby late one night as he dozed in a common room chair. He woke to someone covering him up and saw Dobby there having froze after covering him up.

“Dobby wow it’s great to see you!” Harry said.

“Dobby see Harry Potter asleep sir and the common room cold.” Dobby said. “ Master Dumbledore hired Dobby, no-one else would and he did so here I am!”

“Its great to see you.” Harry said looking the elf over and the odd clothing he wore, child’s soccer shorts, mismatched socks and a tea cozy for a hat that had cut outs for his large ears. “You are doing well?”

“Very well Harry Potter.” Dobby said. “Anything you need, anything at all Dobby helps.”

“Yea, if you have time I have a friend who needs his dress robes mended if you can manage it?”

“Dobby will do anything for Harry Potter.”

The evening of the Yule Ball came and the boys got dressed in their dormitory. Harry put on his bottle green robes, Neville had a set in Navy Blue and Ron put his red ones on and looked down at them, the lace was gone and the hems were neat and his robes looked almost as good as his friends. He looked puzzled then looked over at Harry who looked at him innocently. He knew Harry had something to do with this and he wondered if Harry had done it himself. No Harry could do some housekeeping charms now but nothing like this!

“Spew it mate.” He said.

“Well I may have said to one of the elves to mend what needed mending in our dorm, he may have gone a bit over board...” Harry replied innocently.

“A little?” Ron said grinning letting Harry get away with his little lie. “House Elves are mental.”

“Yea, they are.” Harry said grinning.

They walked down to the entrance Hall and met their dates. Ginny was clad in robes of pink and Harry's date Aurora was clad in robes of mint green and Ron's in lavender robes, all the girls had done up their hair and looked beautiful and much older than third years. The champions would go in first and Harry watched as first Victor Krum and a girl he did not know went in first. Krum was in robes of deep red and the girl was in robes of powder blue. Cedric was with Cho Chang, he was in robes of green, she in robes of light yellow. Fleur walked by in silver robes with a seventh year boy Harry did not know in robes of ice blue.

"Wonder who that is with Krum?" Ron said to Harry.

"Don't know but she is pretty." Harry replied.

"Yea she is." Neville added.

Once the champions entered the hall everyone else followed and Harry looked around in awe. The whole hall was done in ice and snow and the twelve trees were lit with real fairies. Harry sat with Aurora at a table near the champion table and looked over and stared. The girl by Krum was none other than Hermione. Yet Harry had never seen her like this before, her hair was sleek and done up in an elegant bun and she looked so fresh and happy. Ron was not so happy but he did his best to be nice to his pretty date but was not very good at it. Dinner was served, or rather one asked from the menu on their plate what they wanted. Once dinner was over the smaller tables were arranged along the wall and the dancing began. All the hours of practice paid off, all houses proved they could dance and Harry was surprised that Crabbe and Goyle were able to dance, then again with Snape as head of their house he would make sure they could. Draco, clad in robes of black was with Daphne Greengrass who was stunning in cream robes.

"How did Hermione get to be so good looking?" Ron asked Harry.

"She is a girl." Harry replied.

"I never noticed she was, was that good looking." Ron said.

"Yea well she is." Harry said.

The dance went on and Harry was having fun. A few hours in he had to use the restroom and excused himself from his date. He went out into the great hall and down a corridor to the boy's toilet on the ground floor. He was headed back when he heard voices and hid as he recognized one of them. His natural curiosity overcame him and so he stayed hidden as he recognized the second voice, that of Karkaroff.

"You know what this means Severus." Karkaroff said. "You know the signs."

"What signs Igor?" Severus said (Harry wondered since when they were on first name bases).

"Do not play that way with me." Karkaroff said. "He is coming back and you know it, let me see your arm."

"Keep your hands off me Igor." Snape warned him death in his voice.

"Maybe you are afraid Severus?" Karkaroff said

"I have nothing to be afraid of do you Igor?" Snape asked him.

"You will go back?" Karkaroff said.

"If I do you will be the first to know." Snape said and Harry was not sure that was a good thing. "Do not bring this up to me again Igor, I have a job to do as do you."

"Very well, but if..."

"No more!" Snape said sharply to him.

Harry waited until they had left and made his way back to the dance. He found his date fast enough and acted as if he enjoyed the rest of the night. Finally the dance was over and it was time to head back to the common room and to bed. Harry was going to tell Ron all he had

heard but that thought was scrapped when he found Hermione and Ron in a fight yelling at each other. Finally Hermione ran up to the girls dormitory and Ron was left not understanding what had happened. Harry knew it was better to say nothing as he was sure Hermione had been right.

He was tired when he went to bed but not tired enough to fall asleep at once. He was still going over what he had overheard and wondered if it were true what Rita Skeeter said about Snape, that he was a death eater. Finally he did manage to sleep but dreamed of men in hooded robes that all morphed into Snape telling him he was never going to escape Voldemort...

Chapter Fifteen: Christmas:

Harry was excited, one week ago had been the Yule Ball, one week before Christmas to be exact. He was back at McGonagall's, his home he had to remember and all the Weasley's were there as well. He never had spent Christmas like this and he woke up very early. He dressed quickly and ran to the drawing room and found he was the first one there, for the moment. Then everyone else came in, Remus with a large cup of coffee, Fred and George grinning identically, Ron and Ginny came in next. After then came Bill clad in his dragon skin boots his hair even longer now. Charlie came in with his parents and Percy came in with McGonagall and Sirius. McGonagall was the only one of her family to be here, her brother and his family was in America celebrating Christmas with their children and grandchildren.

Harry looked up at the tree and loved it at once. It was huge taking up a full corner of the room and was decorated with all kinds of ornaments, garland and the lights were real live fairies who lived chiefly on honey and cream and did not mind being used for this kind of thing. Under the tree were piles of gifts and Harry looked at them in awe, many it seemed were for him and he had never had so many gifts at one time. In fact he never had Christmas presents before he came to Hogwarts.

"Come on Harry dive in!" Ron said.

"This is brilliant!" Harry said grinning.

"Yea it is mate." Ron said starting on his presents.

Harry started in on his gifts and was grateful for every one. He got a Weasley sweater, some warm socks he really did need from Mrs. Weasley and marbles from Mr. Weasley. From Remus he got (as did everyone else) a large box of Honeydukes best chocolate. Sirius got him a compass for his broom and a motorcycle helmet promising to teach him how to ride his motorcycle. He got a new cloak and coat from McGonagall and from Bill and Charlie a real working model of a Hungarian Horntail, Harry's favorite breed of dragon. Ron got him a book on the Cannons and the twins got him some joke products from

Zonkos. Percy got him some fancy new quills and ink that changed color when writing.

"Wow these are the best." Harry said grinning from ear to ear. "This is the best Christmas ever!"

"I am so glad you think so." Mrs. Weasley said happy to see this young teen so happy. "Merry Christmas Harry, Merry Christmas children."

"Merry Christmas mum dad." The children said.

"We got you something too." Charlie said standing up formally.

"In token our love and appreciation for all you do." Bill said standing by his brother.

"We all chipped in." Fred and George said at once.

"And got you, Ginny the honor is yours." Ron said bowing to his sister.

She picked up two packages that she handed to her parents and Harry watched to see what the seven children had done for their parents. They opened their presents and looked at the new robes their children had scrimped and saved to get them. To say they were happy about their gift was an underestimate, and they happily put on the new robes and found them warm and comfortable.

"Thank you children." Mr. Weasley said quietly.

"Yes, you are so good to us children." Mrs. Weasley said dabbing her eyes with a handkerchief.

"Well I vote for breakfast!" Fred said.

"Me too brother dear, me too!" George replied.

They all went to breakfast all happy about their gifts and gift giving. Remus had come away with some very good gifts of his own, he had gotten several pairs of new woolen socks, a Weasley jumper in navy

blue with Moony stitched on it, Sirius had one as well in red with the Gryffindor lion in gold. The family ate a good breakfast and after Harry and Ron played marbles, this was a game young wizards liked to play just as much as muggles as it did not cause a mess inside. Fred and George let off a few fireworks inside and the sounds of Mrs. Weasley yelling at them was entertainment for a few moments.

"We should go ice skating." Sirius said.

"That sounds like fun." Harry said. "But we do not have ice skates."

"I will take care of that." Sirius said.

He did and soon everyone was out on the small lake enjoying ice skating. Harry was not very good at this but Ron proved he was good at this though he had to duck Fred and George as they threw snow at him. Fortunately for him Bill and Charlie came to his aid and Fred and George were outnumbered as they were attacked from all sides. Sirius came to their aid but it was still six to three as Harry and Ginny joined them to good naturally take out the twins. Percy was the only Weasley to stay out of it. Finally they ended the snow fight and started back to the house.

"That was fun." Harry said.

"Yea it was." Ron said.

"You know I was thinking." Remus said walking by them a gleam in his eye. "To get serious."

"Don't you mean get Sirius?" Ron said.

"What?" The man in question said.

"He said we need to get Sirius!" Harry said scooping up a snowball.

"Brilliant!" Bill said scooping up his own snowball.

"Ah what?" Sirius said and saw nine snowballs heading his way. "Oi that is not fair!"

He was hit and covered in snow and he morphed and ran off full tilt across the snow as a black streak. Remus enchanted a snowball and it got Padfoot right in the side. Fred and George roared in laughter and Sirius turned human and enchanted several snowballs that would have got the werewolf had they not hit his shield charm. This unfortunately sent the snowballs in other directions mainly to hit those around him. Sirius made it into the house and the others found him in the library sitting reading a book, or acting as if he was.

"That was fun." Harry said flopping in a chair.

"Yea, good times mate." Ron said.

"We should do that again." Fred said.

"Yea you know it would have been funny if our favorite professor had been out there." George said.

"Ah yes the potions master." Fred grinned.

"Yea and not one of the snow balls would hit him." Bill said. "I remember him teaching me in school, one tough professor, still I learned a lot from him."

"So did I, mostly that he loves McGonagall." Charlie said. "Or rather how to annoy her."

"I can see that." Sirius said. "He was fun in school, a challenge, James would hex him, he would hex him back twice and so on and on. Still he is evil, very evil"

"You on the other hand got into weakly boxing matches with him." Remus said. "Oh we were horrible in school to each other, lucky we did not get expelled the rate we tried to kill each other."

"You never did, you tried to stay out of it." Sirius said.

"Well when you have an adversary in school who has brains you tend to use words to go after each other."

"I have brains." Sirius said.

"Ah no you do not." Remus said. "I love you brother but you have no brains up there."

"Man that reminds me of some family members." Charlie said grinning at the twins who threw a pillow at him each but got them hexed back at them.

Harry laughed, this day was perfect, he loved being here with family for the Weasleys were as much family as Sirius, Remus and McGonagall were now. He knew he was loved and wanted now and he knew exactly what this season was about now, the giving of love, peace and joy, he could not worry about anything when he was safe with family as he was now...

Chapter Sixteen: Dark Meetings:

Lucius Malfoy was not a happy man, once more Crouch had taken him captive and had tormented and tortured him before he took him to Voldemort. Lucius wished that Voldemort would call him himself but then there had to be a reason he sent Crouch to get him. Crouch was trusted fully, he Lucius was not and he knew how close to the edge he was. More than once this year he had thought how unwise he had been to join Voldemort so many years before. Now aching and in pain he staggered before Crouch and into the room Voldemort sat waiting. He was flung to the floor and lay there too weak to move before his master.

"Lucius it seems you have not got me what I asked for." Voldemort said. "Maybe you do not wish to serve me anymore is that it Lucius?"

"I-I do wish to m-master." Lucius stammered. "The boy is well protected, so much so I have not had a chance to get to him. Master if I was allowed to let Severus know, he wishes to still serve..."

"I said no!" Voldemort snarled. "I do not wish to show myself yet, you will get me the boy or die!"

"Master I have a plan." Lucius said managing to get to his knees. "It will work, it only will take a few months but I will make sure the boy is yours."

"Good because if you do not I will be most displeased." Voldemort said. "Now tell me of your plan."

Lucius did and Voldemort was pleased by it. He was willing to wait now as this was the most solid plan he had got from Lucius so far. It was for this reason he decided to leave off torturing Lucius himself for the time being. Still he loved to torment him as he was still mad at him for not coming to him to help save him. He did not trust Lucius either and that is why he used a disillusionment charm on himself. He was not sure Lucius would stay loyal if he saw how weak and helpless he was now. Besides the foolish man had lost his diary and he would make him pay for that later.

"So how is your family Lucius?" Voldemort asked him.

"Well master, my son takes after his mother, he is really very smart master." Lucius replied.

"Training him well in the dark arts?" Voldemort said.

"Yes master, he will be a great dark wizard." Lucius replied.

"That is good, I will wish to see him in a few years, see if he is all you say he is." Voldemort said.

"Of course, it would be an honor master." Lucius said.

Voldemort noticed that Lucius did not betray any emotion, no he was well trained that way. Purebloods prided themselves on controlling their emotions and were easy to manipulate Voldemort mused. Oh yes just tell them you were going to help make them all powerful and rid the world of the mudbloods and other vermin and raise them up to rule the muggles, oh yes they followed like sheep.

"So I hear Hogwarts is represented by a pureblood?" Voldemort asked.

"Yes, he may be only Hufflepuff but he is pureblood." Lucius said and here he really was a bastard in his thinking. "If not I am not sure if I could support him, Durmstrang has a strong candidate in Victor Krum."

"Yes, yes well as long as we do not have to worry about a mudblood in that role, speaking of which how many impure dare attend Hogwarts now?"

"I know not master but I will find out." Lucius replied.

"See that you do, we are becoming more and more like the animals that dare call themselves wizards in the Americas. Not only do they freely allow mudbloods but they live side-by-side with the muggle filth and even marry them more freely."

"My family does not master, any who dare do such a thing are no longer family." Lucius said.

"Good, you know how to keep your line pure, make sure it stays that way." Voldemort said.

"I will master." Lucius said.

"One more thing, you know of the werewolf Remus Lupin?" Voldemort said.

"Yes, I know of him." Lucius said.

"There will come a time I want him brought to me." Voldemort said.

"You wish to kill him master?" Lucius said.

"No, I want him to serve me, Grayback is not as refined, I need a werewolf who is refined." Voldemort said.

"Of course master." Lucius said.

"Now leave me, I must rest." Voldemort said.

Lucius bowed deeply and rose to his feet and left the room. However Crouch was not done with him, he hated him and was allowed to torment and torture the man as long as he did not kill or maim or scar him. That left a lot of room to really take his frustrations out on the older wizard before him. With a flick of his wand he threw the other man down the stairs and advanced on him. All Lucius could do is hold his now broken arm to his chest and hope that Crouch did not get too carried away with his torture of him this time. He looked up as Crouch came down the stairs and forced him up and outside into the cold.

"Why do you insist on torturing me?" Lucius said with as much dignity as he could muster despite his great pain.

"You only serve him to save your neck, I love him but you, you make me sick!" Crouch spat at Lucius.

"I did not know he had survived, I was wrong, I know that and I am willing to take his punishment, it is up to him what is done to me not you!" Lucius backed from Crouch, he could not get to his wand, it was in his cane, in the hand he was using to hold his broken arm to his chest. "I am surprised at how you are still alive and here, after what you did."

"I was looking for my master!" Crouch shouted at him.

"Oh really? Well then you went about it wrong, maybe he would have been back sooner if you had not tortured people who did not know where our master was but purebloods to boot!"

"How dare you!" Crouch snarled at him raising his wand.

"How are you going to explain to our master you thought it was wise to put me in St. Mungos?" Lucius said his eyes going cold as ice. "Already I will have to explain how my arm was broken if Aurors visit my home then who will help get the brat Potter?"

"Get out of my sight!" Crouch screamed at Lucius adding a few words not fit for print.

"Gladly." Lucius said limping off.

"I will do anything for my master Lucius Malfoy, anything!" Crouch called at the retreating figure. "You would do well to remember that!"

"Do not threaten me boy, I am a Malfoy and many have died for underestimating a Malfoy." Lucius shot back at him.

With a crack he was gone and Crouch after a moment headed back into the manor. Lucius in the meantime came to the gates of Hogwarts and found them to be locked. How was he to get the help he needed when he could not get in? He started to the village in great pain and hoped Aberforth was there, he never asked questions and would patch him up just fine. Though he was Dumbledore's brother he would say nothing about this. Lucius walked into the Hogshead glad to see there was not anyone here. Aberforth saw him and how

pale he was and after an exchange of money took the injured wizard to a room and took a look at his arm.

"I don't really want to know who did this to me?" Aberforth said.

"No, not really." Lucius said.

"Looks like someone threw you down some stairs, a few Cruciatus curses, you must have ticked someone off." Aberforth said setting the broken bones and healing them.

"You could say that." Lucius said stiffly.

Aberforth finished up with the young wizard and Lucius flexed his arm, it was as good as new. He passed more gold to Aberforth and left the inn knowing that Aberforth was just the man, the wizard to go to when one needed help like this. Lucius headed out and Apparated home. One thing was for sure, he was going to kill Barty Crouch if it was the last thing he did...

I don't think anyone needs to feel sorry for Lucius here. He joined Voldemort all those years ago, he has killed for him and tortured for him as well. Still deep down he is not an evil man but he has to pay for his evil ways. Still he is trying to protect his family, he feels he has no choice but to do as Voldemort says to keep his family alive...

Chapter Seventeen: Second Task:

Harry finished the chocolate given him and mumbled the password to the fat lady. She swung open and let the young Gryffindor enter the common room. He had just spent an evening with Moody strengthening his Occulumenty even further. Hermione was very good at it so far and even Ron was better than him by now Harry thought bitterly. He did exactly what Moody told him to but he was still having dreams now and again of Voldemort and it was frustrating him. Moody was concerned, he knew Harry was trying his hardest and finally he had started extra lessons with Harry. Harry dropped into a chair by Hermione as Ron was playing Wizard Chess with Ginny refusing to study anymore that night.

"How did it go Harry?" Hermione asked.

"I am never going to get this, I do exactly as he asks and still I have the dreams or visions." Harry replied moodily.

"You have not passed out in class at all since October." Hermione said.

"Yea but I have a dream a week still." Harry said. "I cannot block Voldemort out completely and he is just going to get stronger."

"Well this is beyond NEWT level magic Harry, you are doing very well with this." Hermione said.

"Yea well even Ron is better than I am and he doesn't even have to try hard or study." Harry said.

"Don't be so hard on yourself Harry." Hermione said quietly. "You will get it. Besides this weekend is the second task."

"Yea it is, I nearly forgot!" Harry said. "Cedric is a certain winner, look what he did with the dragons."

"I wonder what he has to do?" Hermione asked.

“Don’t know, something to do with the golden egg each contestant got.” Harry said.

It was now February and the weather was still so very cold. Valentines day had passed and Harry was glad that the castle was not celebrating the holiday as in his second year. Though Fred and George did manage to get a detention with Snape for “innocently” asking if they could brew a love potion in class for their girlfriends and then on top of that they had went ahead and brewed on up in their potions class. Snape was not amused, took points and gave them detention, though they had to scrub cauldrons for hours they came back as happy as they always seemed to be. Flitwick did give out sweets to his classes but that was the only teacher that recognized the day in any form. Most of the staff was in fact busy extracting hormonal teens from certain parts of the castle kissing. Harry would walk by many a professor that day muttering something about strengthening the wards and he made a note to ask Hermione about that.

“Glad today is over.” Harry said once Valentines Day ended. “Too many giggly girls.”

“I heard some of the older guys stating they hated the wards and wished they could get away with well you know.” Ron said to Harry.

“You cannot do anything like that in Hogwarts.” Hermione said taking a seat by the boys.

“Let me guess it’s in Hogwarts a History.” Ron said.

“Yes, you should read it really.” Hermione said.

“Why when we have you?”

Finally the day of the second task came and Harry was in for a surprise. McGonagall called him and Hermione to the staffroom and Harry saw Snape there along with Derek Yarrow, Ludo Bagman, Fudge, Dumbledore madam Maxine and Karkaroff. Karkaroff looked at Hermione with narrowed eyes, clearly he did not like her at all. Harry saw Moody slump into the room and wondered what was going

on, the champions were not here and there was a small girl her as well. She looked so like Fleur though so much younger that she had to be her sister. Snape looked down at Harry clearly not happy that the boy was here, but then Harry knew he did not like him all that much as it was so the look was not new to him.

“The second task involves the three champions to go into the lake to get bring back one of you.” Yarrow said and smiled at the look on the children’s faces. “You will be quite safe, you will take the potions here and will be placed in the lake.”

“Gabrielle will of course be Fleur Delacour’s task Miss Granger Victor Krum’s and Harry will be Cedric Diggory’s, Miss Chug was going to but she has a bad cold so you will take her place.” Bagman said.

“Of course sir.” Harry said, but thought he better let them know he could not swim, “but I cannot swim sir.” Snape grimaced at this. “Will that matter sir?”

“No you will be fine, no harm will come to you, the mer-people will make sure of that.”

“Well with that shall we began?” Bagman said. “Professor Snape you will give the potions?”

Harry took the goblet Snape gave him having a feeling Snape would love nothing more than to poison him with it. He drank it down and at once felt sleepy. He looked over at Hermione and Gabrielle and saw they already were asleep. He finally closed his eyes and did not remember anything for a long time. He came to gasping wet and cold and realized he was in the lake and that Cedric was scrambling to the shore with him. He saw Cedric had not just taken him, but Gabrielle as well, did he take the challenge seriously? Yes of course he did, as he Harry would have too.

“They would not have let anyone of us die you know.” Harry said to him.

“Now you tell me?” Cedric said trying for a joke. “I am so gonna lose points.”

“Yea but could to leave anyone behind either, let me help.” Harry said.

He took the young girl from Cedric and they staggered out of the lake and Fleur was there, robes torn, looking frantic. She saw her sister and ran to hug her and barely let her go so madam Pomfrey could wrap her in a blanket and give her a steaming goblet of potion. Fleur kissed Cedric then Harry on both cheeks though Harry protested he had done nothing at all. He found himself wrapped in a warm blanket, his robes dried with a drying charm and a goblet of potion in his hands. He drank it down and it warmed him up at once. Ron came up to see how Hermione was and caught part of the conversation she was having with Krum, she was taking to him about her house elf club S.P.E.W. and Krum was listening. Ron went over to Harry instead.

“How was it?” He asked.

“I don’t remember much of it, I woke up being drug out of the lake.” Harry said. “I did dream about a village and mermen with spears, I guess that is what is down there.”

“Yea, you were all there, sleeping, breathing water.” Cedric said. “I thought you were really in danger, this is gonna cost me points.”

Dumbledore was down by the edge of the lake speaking to the merchieftainess in the scratchy screechy language of the Mer-people above the water. It reminded Harry of the death day music two years ago at the death day party. Finally Dumbledore stood up and walked to where the other judges stood and spoke at length to them. Finally the scores were tallied and Krum was scored first, for this task he got twenty out of twenty five points. Fleur got only fifteen points and Cedric was in for a surprise, though he had come in well out the hour time limit. Still he got eighteen points and now was tied with Krum for first place with forty four points each. Fleur came in at thirty five points.

The last task would take place right after finals in the first week of June and that left a long time for the three contestants to get ready. Harry went back to the school and his studies wishing he had more than the Occulumency lessons to keep him busy. He wanted to play

Quidditch but still he loved the tournament and hoped Cedric would win this. He went to bed that night tired, happy and looking forward to a trip to Hogsmead the next day...

Chapter Eighteen: Aberforth:

Harry was happy to be invited to go to mass in the Chapel on Hogwarts grounds. He was mildly religious and did go to church at least once a year. Growing up it had been one highlight of his week, the Dursleys felt that church was one thing he could not miss so he went and enjoyed it as he was not judged or treated badly there. Cedric had proven to be a good friend, he had been there for Harry all year and was very much like an older brother to Harry. Harry went through the mass in the small chapel then as he was leaving he saw an older man that looked very much like Dumbledore walking through the crowd.

"Who is that?" Harry asked Cedric as the man made his way towards them.

"Aberforth Dumbledore, the headmaster's brother." Cedric replied.

"I didn't know Dumbledore had a brother." Harry said surprised.

"He does, he owns the Hogshead inn." Cedric said. "There are many tales about him, most I am sure are just that, but some have a bit of truth to them."

Cedric told him what he knew about Aberforth Dumbledore. He was Dumbledore's younger brother, he had traveled the world and done many things in his life. He even lived for a time in America where it was rumored he had had a family at one time. He had come to Hogsmead fifty years prior, bought the rundown Hogshead, fixed it up and opened it up for anyone to come and stay. It was said one could get most anything there and he had the scoop on anything going on in the magical world. As he came closer Harry saw his beard and hair were darker than his brother's and where Dumbledore allowed his hair and beard to be long Aberforth had trimmed his beard and his hair hung to his shoulders. He walked up to the boys and looked at them with the same blue eyes of his brother, as if he were x-raying them.

"Ah Mr. Diggory and Mr. Potter." He said smiling.

"Mr. Aberforth." Cedric said.

"Been a busy year, you did well in the lake by the way." Aberforth said.

"I took the task literally." Cedric said. "Poor Fleur got caught up by some Grindylows."

"Yea they can be a bit territorial." Aberforth said turning to Harry. "Hmm, been waiting to meet you young man for quite some time now."

"Yes sir." Harry said used to this by now.

"Seems my brother wished it was best to, well if you find yourself needing anything I am willing to help." Aberforth said. "I know what is going on, I see the signs, been talking to Magorian, he sees what most refuse to in the stars."

"What signs sir?" Harry asked.

"War, there is one who will stop the dark lord and I intend to find out who, but for now you need anything let me know."

With that he was gone and he left Harry feeling puzzled, was he the one to stop the dark lord? No he could not be, after all he was just a student and a fourth year at that. No it meant someone else, a great wizard like Dumbledore or Moody or even McGonagall not him. He saw Hermione and Neville just leaving the chapel and excused himself from Cedric and walked up to his friends.

"Who were you talking to?" Hermione asked him.

"Aberforth Dumbledore." Harry said quietly.

"The owner of the Hogshead?" Neville said. "He is legend, it is said that he has saved many Wizarding communities from great evil and when he shows up you know things are going to get better."

"How so?" Harry asked.

“Well he has been gone for a long time, he owns the Hogshead but he left for a few years and came back just this year.” Neville said. “My gran knows him, as does Cedric Diggory’s father.”

“He is different.” Harry said.

“How so?” Hermione said.

“I don’t know, it’s like he knows things that no-one else does.” Harry said. “I am not sure I trust him.”

“Well he is good, on our side.” Neville said.

They made their way into the main part of the castle and back to the dorm room. Harry had a lot on his mind and wondered just what this meant with Aberforth back. He did not see Aberforth make his way to the headmaster’s office and give the password. He knew his brother all too well and just mentioned his favorite sweet and went up to the office and knocked and entered. Dumbledore was sitting at his desk and he looked up in surprise at his younger brother.

“Abe what do I owe this visit?” Dumbledore asked and slid a tin of lemon drops across the table. “Lemon drop?”

“No thank you Albus, I just met young Harry Potter.” Aberforth said.

“Ah yes, wondered why you were back so soon.” Dumbledore said. “I thought your trip was to last a bit longer.”

“Been talking to the centaurs from England to America, they say the same thing.” Aberforth said.

“What is that?” Dumbledore said.

“Come off it Albus, you know that Voldemort is just one problem right now, he has to be defeated and the magical and muggle world have to work together, the greater evil is knocking on the door harder now than ever before.” Aberforth said. “If we do not work together we all are doomed.”

"How are we to do this?" Dumbledore asked.

"I know you put a lot of hope on the young Harry Potter, I know this because I see how you treat him. He may or may not defeat Voldemort but he has to be allowed to grow up, to live his life as he chooses."

"What would you have me to do? The prophecy states..."

"Oh hang the prophecy, prophecies can be changed, he does not have to be the one, he is a boy Albus, a mer child, why cannot the Wizarding world and you see this?" Aberforth asked.

"I know he is a child, I do care about him Abe, I do I don't want him hurt anymore than you do but Voldemort has set him out not the other way around." Dumbledore replied.

"At least keep the boy safe, its all I ask." Aberforth said. "Or I will do it myself."

"What do you think I have been doing?" Dumbledore asked with anger in his eyes. "Alastor, Minerva, even Remus and Sirius all are there to protect him."

"Let's hope that is enough, Voldemort is coming back and you would do well to make sure no-one gets to that poor boy."

With that Aberforth left the office and made his way out of the castle. A few minutes after he left Snape walked out and followed him to the Hogshead. He had a few questions of his own he needed answered and he was worried about things of his own...

A few days later Aberforth called an old friend to his inn. He needed to talk to the old potions master that had retired from Hogwarts so many years before and left the position of potions master and head of Slytherin to Severus Snape. This was Horace Slughorn, an older balding man with huge mustache and even larger belly. He liked his comforts and indeed when he came to the Hogshead he was clad in

fine clothing of velvet and soft wool. Once inside a small sitting room with drinks poured and food offered Aberforth got down to business.

"You know why I am back." He said.

"Yes, he is coming back." Slughorn said.

"You taught him, why can you not use his name?" Aberforth asked.

"I don't see him as, as Voldemort or even Tom anymore, he is just evil." Slughorn replied.

"He created something to extend his life." Aberforth said. "An evil beyond all evils, a Horcrux. "

"I know." Slughorn said. "I knew when Harry Potter destroyed the diary what that was. To know he had created that in school, it's chilling."

"He did not just create one, he asked you..."

"No, not this, I cannot go back to that day, I cannot change what I said let it be, just let it go!" Slughorn said getting agitated.

"If that would help our cause I would but Horace you know as well as I do how charming he could be, how he got his way how he got his power." Aberforth said. "It's not your fault, he betrayed all he pretended to be friends of. How many could a man create before the soul would dissolve completely?"

"Seven, seven Horcrux, if he made seven then he would be unstable, very powerful but with only part of his soul intact, if he did create seven." Slughorn said heavily.

"I doubt it would be seven, six at the most, help me find the others before its too late." Aberforth said.

"I will, why not tell Albus about this?" Slughorn said.

“Eh? Oh well I think he wants to either do this himself or make that poor boy Harry Potter do it, no this is the best way, that boy should have only one thing to worry about, we can and will help him in this.”

“I still think we should include Severus in this.” Slughorn said. “He really wants him dead, and he will do anything to make sure that Tom stays dead this time.”

“I am not sure if I can trust him, if he has to go back, if Voldemort was able to break him...” Aberforth said trailing off.

“Very well, but don’t make Severus’s life harder than it is now.” Slughorn said.

“I would not dream of it.” Aberforth replied...

Yea seems like so many want to help Harry. I feel this would be closer to how things would be, Harry would have a lot of people on his side. Seeing how Aberforth was in the last book in hindsight it does not make since he was not there for the boy in the other books. I rectify that in this fiction here and now. (Sorry JKR for that bit of grumbling).

Chapter Nineteen: The Heads of Houses:

If Albus was not going to act now McGonagall thought grimly then she would. Someone had to let the boy know he was wanted here and needed by them. He was not going to go along as if he were alone what with Voldemort coming back. She walked to the room that very few students or staff knew about, the room of requirement, set up today like a nice cozy breakfast room. Already there was Flitwick and Sprout and all they had to wait for was Severus Snape. Hopefully he would come as he was very smart and knew this was not just any ordinary meeting. The door opened and the tall lean form of the potions master and head of Slytherin came into the room and he took a seat and looked over the other heads of houses.

"A head of house staff meeting?" He asked looking at each of them in turn. "Why is Albus not here?"

"It's just between the heads of house Severus." McGonagall replied quietly.

"Have some chocolate Severus?" Flitwick asked him and with a wave of his wand sent a dish of chocolate to the potions master.

"What is this about?" Snape asked his dark eyes questioning.

"We see the signs, Voldemort is coming back." Sprout replied. "I know you do too, Karkaroff has been a bit too obvious, at least to us."

"Severus when you came to teach here all those years ago you know we had to vote to allow you to be head of Slytherin do you not?" Flitwick asked.

"Yes, I was under the impression you only allowed me to come here because of Albus." Snape replied bitterly.

The other heads of houses looked at him sadly, it became very clear to them now why he kept to himself, why he locked himself away from them. He believed they did not like him and put up with him only because Dumbledore told them to. This was not the case, ever since he was a student they had seen great potential in him. It had

saddened him when they learned he joined Voldemort but then they had an idea as to why. He had lost his father and the name death eater would have intrigued him, for Voldemort spread the lie that death eaters would vanquish death. It was a lie and Snape had found that out far too late.

"No, we believe you Severus, Merlin child we know you are no more a death eater than any of us." McGonagall said.

"I bare the mark, his mark." Snape said looking at the table. "I took it willingly."

"But you know what Voldemort offered was all lies and you turned from him." Flitwick said.

"We want to be your friends Severus, we always have and no more are you going through life alone." Sprout said. "You think all the times we tried to get you to socialize was just out of duty, but Severus we want to be your friends."

"You, you do?" Snape said looking like a little boy with the look of hope on his face. "You want to be my friend even with what I have done?"

"Yes child we do." McGonagall said. "You are worth more than what will be asked of you to us you always will be."

"Thank you." Snape said and he looked very emotional at this.

"No thank you for all you have done for us." Flitwick said, "you are so very important to us even if you refuse to see that."

It reminded Snape of the time, the infamous prank that nearly got him killed. With the marauders the heads of houses had had to unite no more than seven times (once for each year) to punish them for some wild prank or two. The last and most infamous was the prank that nearly got two boys killed, one being Severus Snape the other (if he had bit him) Remus Lupin. When McGonagall found out what Sirius had done she had taken one hundred points from Gryffindor and Dumbledore had put Sirius on probation (he was allowed to finish

school) and he had detention for the rest of his time at Hogwarts. It seemed now that the heads cared very much for him and he was moved by this.

"Thank you for all you have done for us." McGonagall said. "You are the best potions master this school has ever had."

"You mean that?" Snape asked looking at her wide eyed.

"Yes, if not for you well think of all the children who would not be as well as they are now." Flitwick replied.

"And you know quite a bit about plants too, I do like it when you come to my greenhouses." Sprout chimed in.

"Maybe I should stop trying to scare your first years Pomona." Snape said a smile coming across his face.

"Well you cannot help it, you have a reputation to uphold." Sprout said. "Many first years think you are a vampire."

"Indeed, I take that as a complement." Snape said.

"You are incorrigible." McGonagall said smiling at the boy sitting next to her.

"Thank you." Snape said smiling. "I will take that as a complement."

"You would boy, you would." Flitwick said. "Now you must have some chocolate, its really good."

Severus Snape was surprised, he was cared for and he had not known it before now, yet that was changing. With Voldemort coming back those on the same side had to ban together. Snape thought to the mark the slave mark he now came to call it on his arm. The mark he hated and wanted to get rid of, the mark that he had brought on himself so long ago. He would need all the help he could get this time and he was not going to do this alone.

"The mark I bare grows darker, it means the dark lord is getting stronger." Snape said to them. "It would be wise to start the order up again."

"Now?" McGonagall asked.

"Now, before he comes back, I know Lucius Malfoy knows something, he has hinted as much that the dark lord is rising again."

"Albus must be told." Sprout said.

"I agree, if we are to win we must do this now." Snape said. "If things go as I fear they will the ministry is not going to believe or accept that he is back."

"Yes Fudge is a great concern, he is not doing what is needed to protect the magical community here." Sprout said.

The talk turned to what needed to be done to stop Voldemort from ever gaining power as he had before. Snape felt he was part of something here, really truly apart of a group a band of friends. His heart was lighter as he realized he was not alone and never had been ever since he had come here. Never again would he be alone and he would get his revenge on Voldemort finally. The plans and such were gone over and the list of people to speak to were gathered together. Finally the meeting ended and Snape went back to work knowing that sooner or later he was going to have to go back to Voldemort as a spy. Yet that was not a bad thing, not now he was going to do so with friends backing him all the way and it would make his life a bit easier for too.

"We are going to have to use Sirius Black's house." McGonagall said to Snape.

"Oh joy just what I wanted to do." Snape snapped as they walked from the meeting.

"Think if it as Regulus childhood home, would that help?" McGonagall said to him.

“Marginally.” Snape said, “the mutt hates me.”

“Well why don’t you try to give him a chance?” McGonagall said, “look I know what he did in school, I know all that but Severus he was in hell for twelve years! Even you can see he was damaged from that.”

“Yes but do not ask me to like him, not now Minerva.” Snape said, “he is a bully and I do not like bullies.”

“I am working on that, remember he is a Black.” McGonagall replied.

“Yes I know, the Blacks are a cruel and ancient house.” Snape said. “I will try, but do not hope for him to change.”

“Well there are miracles you know.”

Snape nodded and headed down to his dungeons to brew potions. He was not over fond of one Sirius Black that was for sure but he would get along with the blast mutt if it meant getting rid of Voldemort. That was how much he hated Voldemort that he would even be willing to be marginally nice to a childhood nemesis. After all the enemy of his enemy was his friend if he remembered the old phrase that is.

I have received a bit of criticism for how the heads of houses have banded together to be there for Snape. However I know politics very well and I know that Snape would not have lasted two weeks as head of Slytherin if the other heads had not agreed to have him there. Three against one would have made his life hell and he would not have survived in his delicate mental state (if book seven is anything to go on). No they would have to believe Dumbledore and that is why they would want him to know they really were on his side. Besides how could you not be on that cute potion master’s side :P?

Chapter Twenty: New Marauders:

Winter had slowly turned to spring and Harry was outside enjoying the first truly warm day of spring. It was a Saturday and as such he did not want to study so he was outside with fellow students heading for the lake. Even Hermione had left off studying, well studying inside to come outside to study by the lake. She was able to carry all her books as her parents had got her a gift over Christmas (with the help of one Remus Lupin) a bag much like Harry's with an extendable charm to carry her books. There were a few more pockets and such and it was pink, her favorite color with a lioness on the front. She had settled herself under a tree and the boys had decided to go swimming.

"Hermione why don't you come in?" Harry called from the frigid water.

"I have to study." She said from the shore. "Besides I don't have a swimming costume."

"You could transfigure one." Ron said grinning.

"Or she could stay on shore and study and watch you boys freeze." Came the voice of Remus Lupin.

"Remus!" Harry shouted.

"Professor!" Ron, George and Fred shouted at once.

"Come in!" Fred said "The water is nice..."

"A bit cold but..." George replied.

"Nice on a day like this!" Fred finished.

"No boys I think I will stay here but oh there goes Padfoot." Remus said.

Indeed Padfoot aka Sirius Black ran full tilt into the lake. Barking madly, snorting and sneezing water out as he got it in his open laughing mouth and nose he swam out to the boys. They laughed at this sight, a wide eyed laughing shaggy dog coming out here to join

them in their swim. Harry knew Sirius/ Padfoot was making up for so much lost time. He loved playing and had gotten most of his since of humor and even looks back from his time in Azkaban. There was still a haunted look to his eyes every once and a while and he still had the nightmares. Yet right now he was having too much fun to think on things like that as he loved to play and romp like he was.

“Oi Fang where are you going?” Came the voice of Hagrid as his large boarhound ran for the lake to join Padfoot in a romp in the lake.

“Hi Hagrid!” Harry said from the lake.

“Hey Harry, not too cold for a swim then?” Hagrid said.

“No, beautiful day.” Harry said.

“Yea we think Hermione and professor Lupin should join us!” George said.

“In fact I think they should join us now, Padfoot get them!” Fred replied.

Remus looked up from one of the books Hermione had lent him read and took out his wand. He was used to this kind of prank and had in no time a shield charm around himself and Hermione. Padfoot came out of the lake at full speed and ran smack into the shield charm and the boys in the lake roared in laughter as he bounced backward and shook his doggy head and cocked his head to look up at Remus who was smiling now. Padfoot whined and cocked his head in puzzled fashion as he could not figure out what was wrong.

“What a beautiful dog, is he yours?” Said Madam Maxine who had walked up to see Hagrid.

“Padfoot? Nah that is Harry’s dog.” Hagrid said. “Though he may belong more t’ Remus now.”

“Is it not cold for the boys?” Madam Maxine asked, “we have swimming at Beauxbatons but in the sea, not a cold lake.”

“Ah they will be fine, they are strong boys.” Hagrid replied. “How have your students fared?”

“They got through the winter many colds and such but they eat well so they are fine.” Madam Maxine said. “Miss Delacour seems to like it best here I think.”

“Eh she is a beautiful young lady smart too.” Hagrid said. “Your teaching has done that for her I am sure.”

“I have excellent professors as does Hogwarts, even that Severus Snape very young but very smart I think.” Madam Maxine.

“Yes he is, Fang Oi come boy!” Hagrid said then to the children, “don’t stay in too long, professor McGonagall will have my hide if you catch cold.”

“We wont professor.” Fred said.

Harry watched them walk away talking and he saw Madam Maxine was laughing and enjoying the company of Hagrid. He knew full well what Hagrid was, a half giant and so was Madam Maxine, Rita Skeeter had put that in the Daily Prophet as a side note. People did not seem to care as most of the English community had gone to school with Hagrid there and had seen how kind and gentle he was. Only students from Durmstrang seemed to show any hostility but then they were known as a school that did not allow anyone that was not pureblood wizard and pureblood human. Harry got out of the lake and used his wand to dry off and dressed in his school clothes and robes.

“Wonder what is with Hagrid and Madam Maxine?” Harry asked Remus.

“Oh they are dating, they want to keep it hush-hush you know.” Remus said then as Padfoot tried to grab the book from him “don’t you flea bitten mutt, this isn’t even my book!”

“Nice real nice.” Ron said as he got out of the lake, dried off and dressed. “That poor dog he can’t help it.”

"No he can't he is great though." Fred said having fully dressed as had his brother.

"Yea he has been great with his advice." George replied.

"About pranks and things we can do to..."

"Our favorite potions master..."

"Severus Snape!"

"If mum finds out she is going to kill both of you." Ron said. "You are still going to get it for the prank you pulled last month on him."

"Now Ronikins we only did one, on our birthday and we pranked all the heads of houses." Fred said.

"Flitwick thought our charms decorating his classroom were impressive."

"Yea only because they were in his house colors!" Ron replied.

"Yea now why was Snape so upset about our prank?" Fred said.

"All it did was change his robes to a nice..."

"Dark.."

"Somber..."

"Green, ah yes the look on his face when that charm went off, had to go around all day in green." Fred finished.

"You should have dyed his hair green." Remus said a smile twitching his lips.

"No we like living thanks, we know how far we can take things, even the green robes were almost too much," Fred said. "We knew he would not mind as they were his house colors, green trimmed with sliver."

“Yea he would have killed us if not for the fact it was our birthday.”

“And April Fools, still he was upset.” Hermione said, “and what possessed you to do the same to professor McGonagall? She was most put out, it’s a wonder you didn’t get detention.”

“But they were...”

“Done in red!”

“So she could not be too unhappy!” Fred finished.

At this the boys cracked up laughing hard. Yes it had been a wonderful day for pranking, the Weasley twins had their birthday and it was April Fools day. Between their pranks of the heads of houses, students pranking each other and even the headmaster getting pranked it had been a great day. Harry looked up to see Snape walking by glaring at the laughing Gryffindors. He did not stop, he could take points later, right now he had work to do.

“So what was it like going to school with Snape?” Harry asked.

“Well for me not so bad, as I was the smartest of our friends.” Here Padfoot growled. “Okay your mother Lily was the smartest, but of the boys I was the smartest and well Severus was the smartest of the Slytherins so he and I would have battles of words.”

“That I would pay to see.” Ron said.

“Hmmf.” Hermione said.

“When we would argue the crowd would form, Merlin those were fun times. Unfortunately Sirius and Severus boxed each other and James and Severus hexed each other and Peter...” Here he went quiet and jabbed his heel hard into the ground. “You know Peter was a good friend, he was not useless or worthless in school, he was smart and it was him who came up with the idea of James Sirius and himself becoming Animagus.”

"You could not know he would do what he did." Hermione said quietly.
"He was your brother and friend, it's not your fault."

"I don't know when he decided to turn, I don't know why." Remus said sadly.

"Well we are here now and we will never betray you." Fred said.

"No we worship you!" George said bowing low.

"You are"

"Our idol, our mentor!"

"In fact if we may"

"Can we call you"

"Uncle Moony?" George finished.

The twins looked up at him from where they knelt on the springy turf with identical pleading looks. Harry grinned as did Ron and Hermione even was smiling. Remus looked at the boys and he grinned and it spread to his eyes and he fairly glowed. Then he laughed, a happy laugh and even Padfoot laughed a doggy laugh.

"Yes boys you may indeed call me that." Remus said. "All of you can."

"All of us?" Ron said wide-eyed.

"I think it is time to bring in more Marauders besides Fred and George, only you boys have to come up with animal names."

"We do?" Fred said.

"Yea it's the rules, Harry is Prongsling." Remus said.

"Hey!" Harry said.

“Hmm Fox one and Fox two.” Fred and George said at once.

“Hermione will be Owl.” Fred said.

“What?” Hermione said. “You will not dare call me that!”

“Awe but come on Owl!” George said.

At once she was on her feet wand out books and studying forgotten. Remus Harry and Ron watched as Hermione chased down the twins and hexed them within an inch of their lives. Harry could not help but laugh, they had asked for it and Merlin they knew how to push buttons. He wondered if they would survive their last years at Hogwarts if they continued to upset Hermione. One thing was for sure, he was never going to call Hermione Owl because he liked staying in one piece...

Chapter Twenty One: Third Task:

The last task took place the first week of June on the Quidditch field, Harry looked at the field and did not like what had happened to it at first. Where the grass and level field had been was a large hedge maze twenty feet high. Harry hoped that the field would be back to normal for the next year but he did not have much time to think as he looked down on the maze. There were creatures and mists in the maze that the contestants would have to get through and at the center was the Triwizard cup. Harry was impressed at the set up, he knew what the champions were headed into but he was sure that they had no idea as to what was going to happen to them in the maze.

"This looks really dangerous." Neville said from where he sat by Harry.

"Wonder if they know what they face?" Ron asked.

"I doubt it, but that is the fun of it." Hermione replied. "Look they are ready to go in!"

"Yea they are indeed." Harry said.

Cedric went in first as he had the most points, then it was Krum and finally Fleur. At first Harry had his eyes on Cedric, he was making his way through the maze with little effort but then he looked over to see Fleur in battle with a true monster, one of the giant spiders from the Forbidden Forest. A gasp came from the crowd as she was attacked and it looked as if she was bit or stabbed in the arm but she battled on. She truly was fierce as she battled the creature and Harry was awed by her bravery and skills. The spider was huge, so large it barely fit in the path of the maze and dwarfed Fleur. Finally though she managed to prevail and a shout went up when the spider fell backward and moved no more.

"Maybe we should have bet on her." Fred said behind Harry.

"Yea she really took that thing out." George replied.

"That was a huge spider." Ron said trembling slightly, relieved it was not moving.

"Don't worry little bro I will never allow one to ever hurt you if I can help it." Fred said. "I am sorry you know."

"Its okay Fred, you have apologized for that at least an hundred times." Ron said.

"Awe he kept count, George he kept count!" Fred said.

"Yea he did." George replied.

"Quiet, Krum has just come on a, a Graphorn?!" Hermione said. "Oh that is bad, very bad."

"You are right Owl, so very right." Fred said to her.

"Blood hell, can you stop it with teasing Hermione?" Ron said sticking up for Hermione.

Down in the maze Krum was sizing up the Graphorn. It was large but not too large, its chief weapon was two extremely sharp horns. Krum shot a spell at it and had to duck as it came back at him and he flattened himself to the hedge as the creature came to attack as it did not like the fact of the spell shot at him. Krum then did something clever, he conjured up some ropes and in muggle style he fashioned a lasso and roped the creature. Then he jumped on it and the ride was on. As he was so good at Quidditch it was a matter of staying on until the creature got tired. Finally the Graphorn gave out a groan and knelt and Krum was off the creature and had tied it up and he went on.

"Wow that was amazing!" Neville said.

"Yea, I did not think anyone could get one of those down." Harry added.

"Let's see what else they have to face." Ron said looking eagerly at the maze.

Cedric had his share of creatures, first he faced a Boggart which was the same as Ron's a spider, then a drake, the smaller cousin of a

dragon then a creature called the Quintaped. It was muzzled for safety as it liked human flesh but it was still very dangerous besides. It used its five club feet to attack and Cedric was beaten badly about the body as he fought it off. Finally bloody and battered he finished it off and headed on to the center of the maze. He was limping and he was not the only one in trouble, Krum was finished off by a Ruenspoor, he was bit but as the med wizards had the antidote he would be fine. He sent up sparks as his life was worth more than the cup.

"That leaves Cedric and Fleur." Harry said.

"Yea and look, Cedric is near the center!" Hermione said.

"Come on, got money on you mate." Fred said.

"Do I even want to know who with?" Ron said.

"Lucius Malfoy dear bro." George said grinning.

"He is gonna owe us big time." Fred replied.

Fleur was just behind Cedric now and gaining, but Cedric though wounded was faster and hobbling to the center of the maze he grasped the cup and held it up. Fleur came into the center and the roar of the crowd drowned out the commentator. Cedric gave Fleur a quick hug and said something to her that made her smile and as med wizards helped him with his leg the ceremony to award him the winner and give him the 1000 galleons commenced.

"This is brilliant!" Fred said.

"Yea lets go find Mr. Malfoy." George said.

"He owes us."

"Galleons now."

Harry wanted to congratulate Cedric and he made his way to where Cedric was being carried off the field by his house. Harry was caught

up in the cheering yelling crowd and could not get near Cedric. Cedric leaned down to his fellow students and at once a few went and caught up a shocked and surprised Fleur carrying her as well. They were now the king and queen of the tournament and were carried to the castle and to a feast that waited for all in the great hall.

“Well looks like the whole school has something to celebrate!” Ron said.

“Yes that we do!” Harry said.

“Mr. Malfoy! Oi Mr. Malfoy!” Fred called seeing the long haired blond wizard walking with the Durmstrang headmaster.

“Mr. Malfoy sir you owe us on our wager.” George said.

“Yes boys that I do.” Mr. Malfoy said and he turned to them and saw Harry at that very moment. “A Mr. Potter.”

“Mr. Malfoy.” Harry said not liking the look Lucius shot at him.

Though still so much shorter than Lucius Harry had grown quite a bit since the last time these two had faced off. He glared up at the taller paler wizard and really did not like the look Lucius gave him again. It was a calculating look and one that made Harry uncomfortable. What made it more uncomfortable was the fact that his least favorite professor came up at that exact time. Snape looked at Harry who quickly blocked his mind and Snape actually looked away from him for a quick second.

“Potter should you not be at the feast?” Snape asked.

“Yes sir, I was just going.” Harry replied. “Just came to get my winnings from Mr. Malfoy as he owes me.”

“Here you are boys.” Lucius said handing over the gold. “Don’t spend it all in one place.”

Harry followed them into the castle and his feeling of unease left him as he saw the castle decorated in Hufflepuff gold and black. The

party was something he would never forget. It was part feast, part dance and all fun as the Weasley twins set off some fireworks in the school. Mr. Filch even looked the other way as the students had a right to enjoy the win. Sometime later Krum came down and he was cheered just as loudly as Fleur and Cedric were. He was put in a place of honor by the other champions and the part went on in the early hours of the morning. All in all the Triwizard tournament was a complete success...

Chapter Twenty Two: The Trap is Sprung:

Harry was as happy as the rest of Hogwarts, he had a reason to be, Hogwarts had won the Triwizard tournament. For the first time in over one hundred years the Triwizard tournament had taken place and he Harry had been part of this history. The best part about this was the fact that Hufflepuff house had won in the form of Cedric Diggory. He could not be happier on such a beautiful evening. He had gone to see Hagrid with Ron and Hermione and afterwards had taken a short detour along the lake back to the school.

He was right by the lake when he saw what he thought was Hermione's cat Crookshanks and he stared, as well he should have, the cat was limping and looked wounded. He started after him and tried to get him to come to him but the cat was in too much pain and panicking to let him near. Before Harry realized it he was lead away from the lake and nearer the forbidden forest. He realized he could not go into the forest and decided to head back to Hagrid's cabin to get his help when he saw movement that was not an animal or centaur. He took out his wand in defense and saw a tall slender figure in robes, hood and mask step out from behind a tree.

"Well, well if it is not Mr. Potter." Came a voice Harry knew all too well, that of Lucius Malfoy.

"What do you want?" Harry snapped at him.

"Just you boy." Lucius said from behind his bone white mask.

"I don't think so." Harry said. "I don't like your idea of hospitality."

"Such an arrogant little brat aren't we?" Lucius said coldly.

"Well yea but I still am not coming with you, you evil git!"

Now Harry was not experienced at dueling but he did know a few spells that could help him. He could produce a decent shield charm and could disarm and stun too. He hoped that would be enough as he faced off with the taller, older and far, far more experienced wizard. Yet Harry did hold his own and if he had not been so scared he would

have wondered why Lucius Malfoy was not trying to kill him. Yet as it was Lucius pressed Harry back and Harry tripped and fell and twisted his knee cruelly. He forced himself to his feet supported by a tree his wand still out and pointed at Lucius.

"Give it up boy you cannot win against me." Lucius said his gray eyes glinting behind his mask.

"You will not win, I don't know what you want but you will not get it." Harry said.

"Oh?" Lucius said. "And what is a mere school boy going to do about it?"

"Still mad about your elf?" Harry shot at him.

"No, I have others, no you are wanted by the dark lord." Lucius said. "You will come with me."

"When hell freezes." Harry said. "I will not go with you to Voldemort you murdering bastard!"

Now Lucius really, really did not want Voldemort back that has to be explained now. However he saw that he had no choice but to do his master's bidding. If he did not bring Harry Potter to Voldemort he was sure Barty Crouch would kill his family forcing him to watch then slowly, very slowly torture him to death. Lucius really did not want that so he was going to deliver Harry to Voldemort to save his family's and his own skin. So that was why he started after Harry again, he still had to teach the brat manners and he would that was for sure. Harry was an arrogant swaggering bully just as his father had been and was the key to getting Lucius back in the good graces of his lord and master Voldemort. His family depended on him now.

"Oh but you will, you are hurt, weak, I will win." Lucius said.

"Sod off you stupid prick." Harry said.

"You really should learn to watch your language." Lucius said talking down to the boy. "Its rude to swear."

"You should learn not to kill and try to kidnap innocent people" Harry shot back. "That is ruder than swearing."

"Still so arrogant aren't you boy?" Lucius said coldly.

"Look in the mirror you stupid bullying git!" Harry snarled at him.

"You are coming with me now!" Lucius said.

He lunged for the boy but Harry ducked behind the tree. He had vast experience running from adults, he had after all had plenty of practice with his uncle. Yet Lucius was not as slow as his uncle yet he had not expected this and so he had shot a spell at Harry not run after him. The spell hit the tree and blasted a scar across it and Lucius advanced on Harry once more. He was herding Harry to a certain spot and Harry was ducking and hiding as best he could to get away from this man when he saw it. A small rusted pipe or rod on the ground that he could use to defend himself along with his wand. He reached down and picked it up and at once disappeared from the grounds of Hogwarts.

"All too easy." Lucius muttered walking away.

Harry found himself flying through the air, his hand stuck to the rod. He landed with a thud on the ground and stood up carefully, dusting off his robes. He looked around and saw he was nowhere near Hogwarts and refused to show the fear coursing through him. He was in a graveyard and at the moment he was alone, but not for long. He walked through the high gravestones, drawn to the center of the space where he saw a large man-sized cauldron over a large gravestone with a fire under it.

"At last you are here." Came the voice of Lord Voldemort. "Barty seize him."

"What the hell?" Harry said wand out.

"With pleasure master." Barty said turning on the poor boy. "Come here you brat!"

“Let me go you son of a.....”

In an instant Harry was disarmed, thrown against the very gravestone that the cauldron was under and bound cruelly to it and gagged so he could not speak. The hood of the black robed Crouch fell back and Harry looked on the pale straw haired boy with hatred. This was the boy who had betrayed his own father and helped hurt one of his friends parents, a fact that Remus Lupin had filled him in on. Remus believed him guilty and had shown no sorrow when he had died in Azkaban (or so he believed). Still with him here it was clear he had not died and Harry's dreams were not just dreams.

“It is time Barty.” The voice of Voldemort said. “If you are ready.”

“I am master, I am honored to do this.” Barty said.

“I am sorry for the pain you will feel.” Voldemort said.

“It is nothing, it is my penitence for not escaping sooner to get to you.” Barty said.

Harry wondered what he meant and was only able to watch as Barty walked to a small bundle of robes and carefully picked it up. He carried it as if it were fragile and the look on his face was of worship and love. He removed the robes and if Harry could have screamed he would have. What the robes held was a child-shaped creature, but so unlike a child in looks, the skin was raw and red and the eyes, no child could possibly have such demon eyes like that. Barty gently picked up the creature and lowered it into the cauldron and with a dull thunk it hit the bottom of the cauldron.

Please let it have drowned. Harry thought. Please let it have died.

“Bones of the father you will renew your son.” Barty said pointing his wand at the grave below the cauldron and dust shot into the cauldron. “Flesh of the servant willingly given.” He took out a knife and calmly, as if he did this everyday cut off his own right hand letting it fall into the cauldron. He let out a hiss of pain but used his wand to stop the bleeding and walked up to Harry next. “Flesh of the enemy forcibly

taken.” He cut the sleeve of Harry’s robe and cut him and summoned the blood to the cauldron.

Barty stepped back and though he had to be in great pain he refused to show it and stood, waiting and watching. The cauldron’s contents brightened and looked like bright diamonds. The light went out and a thin hairless man rose from the cauldron and at once Barty was there with robes to clothe him. He bowed deeply as the creature stepped from the cauldron and began to examine his pale hairless head and face, his hands and body and he turned, his red eyes on Harry then on his most loyal servant. Harry wanted to scream but could not. Lord Voldemort was back and he was going to die. He felt dizzy with fear and loss of blood. Yet it was nothing compared to what Barty was feeling. He was in pain and suffering greatly but refused to show it. He bowed low to his lord as Voldemort stretched and looked around with his cruel red eyes. He turned to the trembling Barty and looked over at Harry but did not speak to him.

“You are to be rewarded Barty.” Voldemort said to the man who was now on his knees before Voldemort.

“Seeing you reborn is reward enough master.” Barty said.

“Yet you are to be rewarded, show me your arm.” Voldemort said and Barty held up his left one, “no not yet, your reward first.”

Barty held up the stump of his right arm up and Voldemort summoned with his wand a hand, it was golden in color and looked like a knight’s gauntlet. Voldemort fastened this onto the stump of Barty’s arm and at once the pain in Barty’s eyes was gone. He looked at his new hand with awe and fell on his face at Voldemort’s feet.

“Master I am not worthy of such an honor.” Barty said. “You are too good to me master.”

“No Barty, you have been most loyal to me, now to call the others, I wish to see who is still loyal, who will come when summoned, now show me your left arm.” Voldemort said.

“Yes master.” Barty said.

He did and Voldemort touched his arm with his wand and Barty winced slightly but did not say anything. Harry saw the mark move as if alive and he watched as Voldemort stepped back and stood waiting. There was a sound but by the look on the dark wizard's faces not the one they had expected. Barty had his wand out and pointed at a man, a man that clearly was a muggle. Harry tried to cry out to warn him but he could not and he was forced to watch as Barty killed him in cold blood. He watched the man hit the ground with a cold sickening thud and at the same time the sound of people Apparating into the area made him turn his head to watch.

For the second time in his life Harry saw death eaters in full robes and masks up close. Their black robes flowed over their frames and their hoods almost completely hid their bone white masks. They formed a half-circle around Voldemort and Barty, twenty people showed up and took their places and as it became clear no more would come they closed ranks and stood a solid wall of black facing Voldemort. He seemed to expect more but resolved himself to those here. He began to speak to his followers, and what he said is mostly recorded but there are a few things that are not in the record as Harry did not fully report them at the time. Finally he finished on how he came back with the help of two of his most loyal servants.

"Barty came to me when he managed to free himself from the grip of an oppressive father." Voldemort said. "Yet no-one else did, no-one believed I was back, except one other came to me first out of fear then out of loyalty, Lucius come here."

"M-master please forgive us!" One of the men broke the circle and crawled to Voldemort.

"Not yet Avery." Voldemort said. "Crucio." The death eater began to scream and writhe on the ground and Harry hoped someone heard them and would come and stop this. "I waited thirteen years and I want thirteen years of repayment from each of you! Lucius has repaid some of his debt, Barty owes me nothing, he has shown his love and loyalty."

“Master I am honored to serve you, no greater joy do I have than that of being in your service.” Lucius said as he fell to his knees before Voldemort.

“Yes I know, however you still owe me so much Lucius, you came back out of fear, not loyalty.” Voldemort said coldly.

“I am sorry master.” Lucius said.

“Yes, however I have forgotten one who helped me come back, how the lies that have fed his fame.” Voldemort said walking up to Harry. “After tonight the only thing that will be said about Harry Potter is how well he died.”

As Voldemort spoke Lucius was trying his best to keep his horror out of his mind and face though he wore a mask. He did not want Harry dead and though he had helped get the boy here he had hoped it would not lead to this. Yet what choice did he have? He felt trapped, he had to keep his family safe and alive and he had to do what Voldemort told him to, even if that meant an innocent boy had to die. Still he felt horrible about it and he knew what he did here was wrong but still did it. He was not brave and did not pretend to be, he was here was he not?

“Yes after tonight Harry Potter’s name will pale to mine.” Voldemort said. “Barty unbind him and give him back his wand.”

Harry scrambled the best he could to gain his feet so that when he was unbound he would not fall to the ground. He was roughly unbound and the gag was removed and his wand shoved into his hand. Though his knee hurt him badly he managed to stand on it and walk with barely a limp to face Voldemort who was taunting him with his eyes. Before Harry could defend himself or try to fight back Voldemort cast his first spell and pain hit him so hard he fell to the ground and could not control the screams coming out of him. Finally the spell was lifted and he staggered to his feet running into the wall of death eaters who shoved him back to face Voldemort.

“You don’t want me to do that again do you?” Voldemort asked Harry. “That hurt did it not?”

"Answer him boy." Barty ordered him just as Voldemort hit Harry with the Imperius curse.

"You don't want me to do that again do you?" Voldemort said to Harry. Say no, just say no.

"I wont!" Harry shouted.

"You wont?" Voldemort said coldly and no-one was laughing now. "You wont say no? You wish to end this now perhaps?"

Harry was more prepared now and when Voldemort shot a spell at him he ran and ducked behind a gravestone as Voldemort's spell hit the gravestone. Lucius was amused, the boy had guts and was smart as well. He was rooting for the boy and hoped he would win. Voldemort was taunting Harry now and Harry came around the stone and he cast his disarming spell just as Voldemort cast the killing curse. What happened next surprised everyone including the two dueling wizards. The spells met and the two wizards ended up flying over the heads of the death eaters below and to a space further away.

"Do nothing, I will take care of this!" Voldemort called out.

Now the wands were letting off arcs of radiant golden light and none of the death eaters could get near the wizards. Inside the circle Harry was concentrating for all he was worth, beads of light were now going towards Voldemort's wand and Harry knew he had to keep that light going away from him into Voldemort's wand. What happened next was all a blur to him, he remembered seeing the man just murdered, the new hand, then, his mother and father came out in ghostly white and walked around him and Voldemort. They gave words of encouragement to him and said things to Voldemort that made Voldemort scared.

"You will only have a few minutes once the connection is broken." His father said.

"When we say now, break the connection." His mother said.

"You defeat this evil one when you can." The muggle man said. "We will stop him for now."

"Now!" James shouted.

Harry broke the connection and ran for it past the startled death eaters and fell. Yet he was close enough to see the rod that had brought him and he summoned it to him. At once the graveyard, Voldemort and his followers were gone and he was flying through the air. He hit the ground hard and crawled to the edge of the forest and managed to stand and limp a few steps. He groaned and started to fall when he was caught by two strong arms.

"Harry Potter what are you doing out here?" Came the voice of Aberforth. "Just got word the alarm went off, someone used an unauthorized portkey."

"Voldemort is back, attacked in the forest, rod, portkey." Harry said as the aged wizard supported him back to the castle, he fell and Aberforth picked him up. "Lucius Malfoy attacked me!"

"All right, I am gonna take you back to the castle, you will be safe, you can tell Albus what happened."

"There you are Potter." Came the voice of the potions master and Harry looked up in dread. "So this fuss is all about you as usual."

"Stop it Severus, not the boy's fault, Voldemort is back and Harry is hurt." Aberforth snarled at him. "You know that Voldemort is back?"

"Yes, let me take Harry." Snape said.

"No!" Harry said not wanting to have Snape anywhere near him.

"I think I better carry him in." Aberforth said.

"Normally I would agree, however I am more than capable." Snape replied.

Harry found himself handed over and he was all too aware of the strong muscles under Snape's robes. He wished he could walk, this was humiliating to him. He groaned, not in pain but fear as he realized Voldemort was back. Snape felt the small teen tremble in his arms and he was worried, if Harry was going into shock that was not good, they needed to know what he knew. Snape could smell the blood on Harry's robes and knew he was hurt, but even if Harry did not believe it he was safe, Snape was not going to hurt him, not like Voldemort had...

Chapter Twenty Three: The War Begins:

Snape carried Harry quickly from the woods and back to the castle. He was not going to carry the boy into the castle, no he knew that would just get the boy to hate him even more. Once they were near the castle Snape put him down and healed his knee as best he could so he could walk. He steered the boy into the castle where he saw the rest of the search team. When the alarm had sounded and Harry had not been found the worst had been feared of him, but seeing him alive now made everyone relieved to say the least. McGonagall came up to take Harry but Snape refused to let her have him. Snape knew what Harry had to do as it could not wait and he knew the teen wanted to tell what happened tonight.

"No, he has to see the headmaster now." Snape said.

"Voldemort is back, I saw it." Harry said.

"What, how?" McGonagall said.

"That is what I need to know." Came the voice of Dumbledore.
"Severus please bring Harry to my office."

"He needs rest Albus, can this not wait until morning?" McGonagall said.

"If it would help then I would say yes but I know it will not, sooner or later he will have to face what happened." Dumbledore said.

"He is hurt, let him rest at least!" McGonagall said.

"I want to tell them professor." Harry said quietly. "Please?"

"Of course Harry." McGonagall said wanting to cry for her poor brave cub.

"Come Potter." Snape said.

He steered Harry up the stairs firmly and behind the headmaster. Harry was still reeling from all that happened that evening. He was

steered into the office and to a chair and he sat down and saw to his relief that Remus was there with Padfoot. Snape left the room and Dumbledore took a seat and looked over at the pale boy slightly trembling in his chair. He had to ask the poor boy what had happened, he knew he was in shock and needed rest and care but this would help and they needed to know what he knew now.

"Harry I need you to tell me exactly what happened tonight." Dumbledore said.

"Can this not wait?" Sirius asked stepping up to put a protective hand on Harry.

"No, he has to go over what happened, it will be worse in the long run if he does not." Remus said. "Once he is done however I am taking him to madam Pomfrey."

"Very well, Harry please tell us what happened." Dumbledore said.

Harry began and told them how he had been tricked to the edge of the forest and how he had been attacked by Lucius Malfoy. He told them of the fight and the portkey and the graveyard and how he had been bound and forced to watch as Barty did the dark spell to bring back Voldemort. When Harry got to the part where Barty had cut him and used his blood he thought he saw a gleam in Dumbledore's eyes but shrugged it off to a trick of light. He talked on and on, about the death eaters coming back, and how he was forced to fight Voldemort. When he got to the wands connecting he felt Sirius grip slacken in shock and Dumbledore look thoughtful. Finally he was done and sat quiet. He felt he had been talking for hours.

"I see, so he is back." Dumbledore said. "I feared this, Remus you will take Harry down to the hospital wing, Padfoot will go with him."

"Come on Harry, here have some chocolate." Remus said.

"I am sorry." Harry said.

"Not your fault, you are back and that is all that matters." Remus said.

He helped Harry down the stairs to the hospital wing and madam Pomfrey was right by his side and helping get him to a bed at once. She put screens up around the bed and let Harry change then she came and looked at his arm and carefully healed it up and had him get into bed. She poured a potion into a goblet and handed it to him to drink. He took it and looked at it while she fixed up his cuts and bruises and tucked him into bed.

"Its dreamless potion." She said. "So you can sleep."

"I will stay here, as will Padfoot." Remus said.

"Thank you." Harry replied.

He drank it down and at once he was fast asleep and slept through the night. He woke the next morning wondering how he was to face the school. He knew Dumbledore believed him but who else would? He had to face the school and found Ron and Hermione waiting for him concern on their faces. He went to breakfast with them and saw the whole school staring at him, great they had been told and he did not want to answer any questions or speak about what had happened yet. He was not to be so lucky, that very day he was called to the headmaster's office once more and saw the minister of magic there looking very upset.

"So there is the boy." Fudge said looking very annoyed. "Spreading tales now boy?"

"No sir, I saw him rise, I was there, Voldemort is back!" Harry replied.

"If you act now, much damage can be prevented." Dumbledore said calmly to Fudge.

"I believe Harry, he would not make up something like this." McGonagall said as she was here as well along with Snape who looked more pale than normal. "You love your office too much, you cannot see the truth that is before you."

"Look at this." Snape said shoving up his sleeve. "It was darker last night but he is back, I can show you the marks to prove this as well!"

"I am sorry but I will not, cannot believe this!" Fudge said. "He cannot be back, he just cannot!"

"He is sir, I was there, I don't want him back but he is and he must be stopped." Harry said.

"I will not believe this, this pack of, Dumbledore I do not know what you are about here but I am going to find out, good day!"

He left through the floo and Harry's heart sank. How was he to prove that the most feared wizard was back now? He looked up to see that those here believed him but to him that was not enough, he wanted everyone to believe him. He excused himself and went to his common room and went about the rest of the day like nothing was wrong. Still that was not true, so much was wrong now and he wished that Voldemort was not back. This was worse than anything he could have thought, seeing that evil creature in the graveyard made him angry and a bit fearful all at once.

Harry went back to classes the next day and was not happy one of his classes was Divination that very morning. He had to sit there and deal with the omens of death that Trelawney kept at of him. He remained stoic as she talked of how he was to die a very tragic death and he was not happy when he ended up accidentally dropping his ink and having to stay behind to clean it up. He wanted out of there when he looked up and saw Trelawney seemed to be asleep. Then she spoke in the same terrible voice he had heard just last year:

"The one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord approaches ... Born to those who have thrice defied him, born as the seventh month dies ... And the Dark Lord will mark him as his equal, but he will have power the Dark Lord knows not ... And either must die at the hand of the other for neither can live while the other survives ..."

Harry stood rooted to the spot, he knew it was about him, why else would she say that? He fled the room and went to the headmaster's office and gave the password. He ran up the stairs fright on his young face and knocked on the door then burst in before Dumbledore could

say anything. He rose staring at the wild looking boy and Snape who was in the room just stared at Harry as if he were insane.

"Is there a reason for bursting in on the headmaster Potter?" Snape snapped at him.

"I-I was in Divination and I was cleaning up something I spilled." Harry said.

"Good of you to clean up Harry." Dumbledore said. "See Severus they are such good students we have, but do go on Harry."

"She, she started to say something, about me sir, I am sure it was about me." Harry repeated the words he had heard and Snape turned white as chalk and Dumbledore looked grave. "Well that is another raise I owe her."

"What does it mean sir?" Harry said. "Does it mean what I think it does?"

"I am afraid it does Harry, please have a seat, this is most unusual. A prophecy usually is only given once, but there are rare cases."

"What does that mean sir?" Harry asked.

"It means that before you were born a prophecy was made about a boy born at the end of the seventh month, Voldemort would mark him as his equal."

"So that could mean Neville sir." Harry said.

"No, I am afraid it does not." Dumbledore said sadly. "I should have told you this years ago, but it does mean you, he chose you as his equal."

Harry felt weak and scared, he was just a boy, he could not do this! He looked as if he would faint and Snape saw all sign of Gryffindor bravery leave him. Then as the shock wore off a new look came over Harry, one of resignation. He looked up at Dumbledore calmly, still

afraid inside but in away he was glad to know now, he would do what he had to now he knew what he had to do.

“He is going to regret he ever messed with a Potter sir.” Harry said to Dumbledore. “I promise you that.”

“You still need training, you cannot take him on now.” Snape said hiding the fact he was impressed with the boy’s bravery.

“I agree, there will come the time, for now trust your friends, trust Remus and Sirius, let them help you, this does not mean you do this on your own. In fact I forbid you do so on your own.” Dumbledore said. “Now would you like a lemon drop?”

“Um no thank you professor,” Harry said getting up and walking to the door. “You know sir it’s a relief to know, I am glad she said something.”

Dumbledore looked at the young boy who was trying to be so brave. He saw a calmness come over the boy and he realized this boy was far stronger than he had given him credit for. Well both boys were really, Dumbledore looked from Harry to Snape and realized the world rested on the shoulders of the younger generations. Merlin he had never felt so old as he did now, still it was good to be alive now to see such strength in his office.

“Harry a bit of advice, please do not keep this to yourself, let your friends know.” Dumbledore said.

“But how can I burden them with this?” Harry asked.

“How can you keep them from helping you?” Dumbledore said. “They would feel betrayed if you did not tell them and let them help you.”

“Okay, I will sir.” Harry said.

He left the office and both Snape and Dumbledore stared after the boy. He would have a great challenge before him, once things settled down for him over the summer he would have time to think on things. Dumbledore knew that Harry would win, he had to or they were all

doomed. Snape worried about this as well, he wanted this to end, because he wanted Harry safe and did not want to fight this war anymore himself.

McGonagall watched Harry closely over the next week, she had spoke to Dumbledore and was now so much more protective of her little cub. She knew by the determined looks on Ron and Hermione's faces that he had told them what he faced and it made her feel better as well. She needed to speak to Harry alone and so on a nice spring day, warm and bright she had Harry go with her on a walk around the lake. As they walked Harry looked over the lake knowing she wished to speak to him and wanting and dreading this at the same time.

"It's a shock all this." Harry said knowing she wanted to listen more than talk. "I mean seeing him come back and then the prophecy. I mean I, I am just a boy, I am too young for this. I can barely do a shield charm, and what good is a my Patronus against Voldemort?"

"You have friends, Remus and Sirius, the Weasleys, Longbottom and you have me." McGonagall said. "Voldemort will have to get through me to get to you."

"I know you are there for me." Harry said. "But I know I will have to face him and it scares me."

"I know child I know." McGonagall said.

She put an arm around her young charge and let him know through that she cared and she was there for him. Too much rested on his young shoulders, but didn't they all have so much resting on them? She knew Harry would be alright, he was not going to face this alone. She saw Fred and George Weasley, two more of her cubs, pranksters jokesters were playing catch with the giant squid. She smiled, with children like Fred and George there was hope in the world, a since of humor helped the world continue going.

"Did you tell Fred and George?" McGonagall asked.

"Um no, I didn't want to burden them." Harry said.

“Well I think you should, they care about you, I have heard them call you their brother.” McGonagall said.

“They have?” Harry said amazed at this bit of news.

“Yes, they have, they worry about you and care about you, you must tell them Harry.” McGonagall said.

“I will, thank you.” Harry said thoughtfully. “They may have some really good ideas, maybe they have some pranks to send Voldemort into St. Mungos permanently.”

“Yes I could see that.” McGonagall said.

“Or they could just prank him until he surrendered.” Harry said grinning.

“Go talk to them and try to keep them out of trouble.” McGonagall said.

“Yes professor.” Harry said running off.

McGonagall watched as he walked up to Fred and George and smiled, they really did care about him a lot, after all they had rescued him before his second year from his relatives. Then last year gave him the Marauders map and when he was in the hospital wing they had piled his bedside table with chocolate. Yes they carried and Harry was wise to talk to him. The prophecy was right McGonagall mused, Harry had a power Voldemort knew not and that was friendship, family and love. Harry would defeat Voldemort, and not alone no he would do so with friends and family supporting and loving him all the way.

McGonagall headed back to the castle knowing that a new age had come and that it would be a better time than the old age had been. New alliances would be formed, old hatreds would be cast aside and life would become that much better for all concerned. Voldemort being back was only a temporary thing, once he was gone then the healing would begin. McGonagall looked back at Harry from the front doors and smiled as she saw him talking to Fred and George

Weasley by the lake. She smiled, Voldemort did not stand a chance with such good people in the world...

The End.

Okay not really, part two is being revised and will be up soon enough. It will be under A Lion in Winter and I do hope you will enjoyed the revision. See you there!